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RELIGIÆ LUDOLFIANÆ:

THE

Pious Remains

OF

Mr. Hen. Will. Ludolf;

Consisting of

- I. Meditations upon Retirement from the World.
- II. Also upon divers Subjects tending to promote the inward Life of Faith, &c.
- III. Considerations on the Interest of the Church Universal.
- IV. A Proposal for promoting the Cause of Religion in the Churches of the *Levant*.
- V. Reflections on the present State of the Christian Church.
- VI. A Homily of *Macarius*, &c.

L O N D O N:

Printed and Sold by J. Downing in Bartholomew Close near West-Smithfield, 1722.

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TO THE  
Right HONOURABLE  
THE  
Lady ELIZABETH  
HASTINGS.

*My Lady,*

**V**ARIOUS are the Lets and  
*Impediments* which obstruct  
the spiritual Pilgrim in his  
way to Life and Happiness. There is  
no State, no Place, no Condition, no  
manner of Life free from the Tem-  
ptations of the common Enemy of  
Souls. The most retired Recess and  
remotest Solitude is as well exposed  
to Temptations, as a Life subject to  
every one's View, and employed a-  
bout high and publick Concerns.  
There is this Difference only, that the  
Deceiver of Souls most artfully suits

### *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

his Temptations to the present Circumstances of Place, Time, Person, and the like, to make them the better go down with those whom he designs to ensnare. The *End* of all the Allurements, whereby the great Enemy imposeth upon a sincere Christian, is no other than to *withdraw his Heart from the Love of the Creator*, and to fix it on the Creature. This must needs be attended with a Train of endless Misery. It is Man's Unhappiness, that he hath lost the true *Object* of his Love, and finds it exceeding hard to recover it. *LOVE* placed on a wrong Object is the very Foretaste of Hell: But if it be fixed there where it ought to dwell, it is a Foretaste of Heaven. Numberless Arguments might clear up this Truth into an unexceptionable Evidence; but as our own Experience is the best Teacher in Matters of Religion, so it is particularly in this Point.

Should we trace the *Unhappiness* of Mankind from its first Original, and run through all the Scenes of Misery as have appeared in the World ever since; we must then certainly date Man's Misery from the Day in which

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which he began to *misplace his Love*. Nay, should we go to the very first Inlet of Misery, even before it reached Mankind, I mean the *Apostacy of the Angels themselves*; the *Misplacing of Love* would still be the prime and original Cause thereof. This hath turned a most glorious Angel into a most horrid Devil, and a Friend of God (as Man was,) into his Enemy, and so hath defaced two of the noblest Pieces of the divine Glory and Workmanship.

Those that by the Principle of Grace begin to see higher than Men in their fall'n State do, must needs look back with Pity and Compassion upon their former Life, and upon all such as are still tossed about in the same Sea of *misplaced Love*, out of which they themselves are escaped at last. The Misery of apostate Man is now so much the greater, the easier it is for any Creature to engross his Love to its self. The meanest Object may now master the noblest Affection: Man must surrender it at the first Summons, without being able to maintain his Freedom against such violent Intruders. *Jonas* spent his Love on  
A 3 a Gourd;

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a *Gourd*; and when he could not enjoy it to the full, he repined near unto Death, and was like to expire with his beloved Plant. The rich Man in the Gospel resigned up his *Love* to the *Goods* his Ground had brought him. He was so full of his empty Riches, that every Word favoured of *misplaced Love*. Nothing came from him but *my Fruits, my Barns, my Goods, my Soul!* This is the Voice of an unbelieving Heart, enslaved by the Creature, and broke loose from the Creator. Not one Word of God, who had given him all this! There is never a *My God*, neither in his Heart nor Mouth.

So attractive, so strong and extensive is the Power of Love, wherever it gaineth Ground, let it be right or wrong! If it be wrong and *misplaced*, it breedeth all the Misery that all along hath overflowed the World. 'Tis by *misplaced Love*, we commonly work our own Ruine. Some will have it, that the rich Man, who so earnestly solicited the Conversion of his Brethren, did it entirely out of *Self-Love*, and for no other



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other End, than to prevent the Increase of his Torment by the timely Repentance of his Companions. He feared he should still share the Punishment with those who had had a Share in his Sin and beloved Vanity, and were still pursuing the Course of Life he had set 'em. And after all, what heinous Sin was it this Man was found guilty of, and what enormous Crime did condemn him to so dreadful a Torment? Verily, nothing but *Love misplaced*. Sumptuous Fare, purple and fine Linen, together with a free Enjoyment of the good things of this Life, on which he placed his *LOVE*, made up the black List of his Transgressions. Things which now-a-days would be counted *innocent Diversions*, did bind him over to everlasting Punishment, and bereave him of a Drop of Water to cool his Tongue. But this is the dreadful Effect of *Love misplaced* ! As keen a Passion *Love* is, so keen are all the Consequences attending it, whenever it comes to exert its Power.

On the other Hand ; if *Love* be right and *well-placed*, it will then

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sway the Mind with a divine Rectitude, attracting all what is in the Soul into him, who is the Author of good and sound Love. It bringeth all the Faculties of the Mind to a sweet Rest. It sets the *Will* free from unruly Desires, and calmeth the *Affections* into an heavenly Tranquillity. The *Understanding* is content to dwell on one and the same Object a whole Eternity. For he that knoweth God, will never grow weary of knowing him yet more. All other Objects the Understanding fixeth on, may wear it in time, and leave a Sting after a short Enjoyment: But there is no Weariness in the Love of God. To work in the Principle of Love, is to eat the Bread of Life. And altho' there be a *Constraint* in the best of Loves; yet is it a Constraint without Violency; a Burden without Uneasiness; a Yoke without Toil and Anxiety.

This Love is the costly Pearl, and the precious Treasure, for which a Christian sells all. 'Tis hid in the Fields; and because 'tis hid, few will be at the Pains of seeking after it. Those that have tasted of it, desire  
more

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

more of it: But then they are here in the Day of Probation; whereby the Practice of their Love is exercised, the Sincerity of their Love proved, and more and more refined from the adhering Dross of false and corrupted Love. As every Day hath its particular Trial, so every Trial hath a constant Tendency to rectifie more and more the earthly Biass of the Soul, and to qualifie it for receiving the Influence of a purer Love.

*My Lady,*

If at any time the Study of *Divine Love* hath been necessary, it is certainly now, when we see so many dark Judgments gathering over our Heads, and the Affairs of Christendom put into so dismal Confusions. The World must needs be a very uncomfortable Place to a free and Heaven-born Spirit: And all this for want of *Love*, which is enough to turn the World into a Wilderness, and Church and State into a Labyrinth of Delusions. However, he that dwelleth in the Tabernacle of the *Love* of God, shall not be hurt by the Evil of the latter Days.

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

The *Treatise* offered here to your *Ladyship*, tends entirely to the Increase of *Universal Love*, and of such Christian Endeavours as are grounded on so generous a Principle. The Author, You know, made it his Business to promote a Spirit of *universal Love* wherever he came, and very often complained of that *hellish* Principle of *Self-Love*, whereby the best Faculties of the Mind are prostituted to most uncharitable Purposes.

The Reason which induced me to publish the *Discourses* here annexed, is no other than to do Good to some Souls, especially to such as groan under the common Broils and irreligious Clamours of these Times, which a Christian Eye must needs look upon as Judgments of Infaturation over the perverse State of Christendom. But the Motive, why I present them in particular to your *Ladyship's* Hands, is, because I know You relish, by the Grace of God, experimental Discourses, and particularly such as savour of *divine Love*. I don't question but much of what is said here,  
You



## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

You have heard from our deceased *Ludolf's* own Mouth, whilst he was on this side the Grave, and had the Honour of your *Ladyship's* Acquaintance; and I hope they will leave, even now after his Death, a vivid and lasting Impression upon your Mind.

I did not consult either my own, or any other Man's Reason about publishing these small Tracts: For my Design was not to *please* any; but to *profit* many, if possible. I thought Exhortations to Christian Love, which make up the Substance of the following Pieces, could never be *ill timed*; and if they could be out of Season at any time, yet they could not possibly be so now; since there is so much Hatred and Bitterness, and so little Love and Charity, even among those, whose very Badge and Characteristick should be *LOVE* and Forbearance.

As the Lord in his infinite Mercy hath not suffered your *Ladyship* to be carried away with the Torrent of the Times; but hath begun to raise you above the *fashionable* Vices of the Age; so You ought faithfully to answer

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fewer so uncommon a Mercy tendered to You in the midst of so many that render themselves unworthy of that glorious Offer. You ought to improve all these Mercies to an higher Degree of *Love, Humility, Self-denial*, and of other evangelical Virtues, design'd to adorn the Profession of Christian Faith. Though it be hard to have the things of this World, and not to *love* them; yet is it not impossible: And though *not many* Noble be called; yet there are some few. For this is the Victory of Faith which triumphs over the World, and all its fading Grandeur; and whose Triumph will appear at last the more conspicuous, the more it hath been struggling against the Oppositions of the Enemy. The seeming Meanness of the Gospel ought not to hinder you from making your self a Sacrifice to him, who first made himself a Sacrifice for you. 'Tis in his Power plentifully to reward those that faithfully serve him; though his Credit be sunk very low in this Generation, wherein People are more led by *Sense* than by *Faith*.

As your Ladyship hath given some Proofs hitherto, that You are not ashamed

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shamed of the Gospel, nor of him who establish'd it, nor of those that confess it; so You may commit yourself entirely to the Wisdom of the LORD, who is both willing and able to accomplish in You the Work once begun, and confess You again in his time, as You have confessed Him here. His Wisdom will lead You safe, though perhaps through many *crooked Ways*, and bring thereby Fear and Dread upon you for a while: But fear not! This is the Discipline of Wisdom, whereby her Sons and Daughters are initiated into the Knowledge of the sublimer Mysteries of Salvation. Her Bonds will at last be Bonds of Freedom; and her Chains will become a Robe of Glory, and her Fetters will be turned into a strong Defence in the Day of the coming of the LORD. Which that the Lord, in his great Mercy, may grant to your Ladyship, is the sincere Wish of,

*My Lady,*

*Your Ladyship's*

*Most humble and obedient Servant,*

ANTHO. WILL. BOEHM.

I have been thinking of the Gospel, not of this  
 world. I should like to see of those that  
 counts not to you may count on your  
 but, certainly to the world. I am of the  
 O.R.D. I am not willing to be a part of  
 second of the world. You are a part of the  
 good and beautiful. You are a part of the  
 as you have counted Him. You have  
 His. W. M. M. will lead you. This  
 though a passage through many crosses  
 W. M. M. and this is the way. You are  
 and a part of the world. You are a part of  
 not. This is the Discipline of W. M. M.  
 don't worry by her sons and daughters  
 are initiated into the knowledge of the  
 higher mysteries of salvation. Her  
 bonds will be all the bonds of the  
 good; and her chains will become a  
 robe of glory, and her tears will be  
 turned into a strong perfume in the  
 day of the coming of the Lord. W. M. M.  
 Which that the Lord, in his great  
 mercy, may grant to your family.  
 In the name of the Lord.

Sept 24



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## T O T H E English Reader.

*A*mong the various Mistakes about the Christian Religion, none are more dangerous than those that are committed about the **END** and the **MEANS** of Christianity. The End of the great Work of Redemption, and of Christianity raised thereon, is variously expressed by the sacred Writers, to clear up the better a Point, the Knowledge whereof is so highly necessary to every true Christian. One of the plainest Passages is John X. 10. where the Lord himself tells us: I am come that my Sheep might have **LIFE**, and that they might have it more abundantly. And 1 Pet. II. 24. 'tis said, Christ bore our Sins, that we might live unto Righteousness. And St. John 1 Ep. IV. 9. declareth that God hath sent his Son into the World, that we might **LIVE** through him.

§. II. This plainly shews, what the State of Man is before he feeleth the Effect of the Redemption wrought by Christ, and what he ought to be, when he now comes up to the main End and Design of the Gospel by him established. The first State before he is made sensible of the glorious Effect of the Gospel, is a State of spiritual Death, a State very dismal and deplorable in all its Effects and Consequences. It hath its Rise from the first Transgression of Man: In the Day thou eatest of the forbidden Tree, thou shalt surely die. Man did not only on that Day contract the Seed of all manner of bodily Distempers; but he actually died to GOD, and to the divine Life and Light, which resided in Man's Mind, and most gloriously displayed it self in all his Works and Actions. And he would have been dead for ever, if the Lord in his infinite Wisdom had not contrived a Means for his Recovery, and by the Word of Promise offered to fall'n Man, revived his Hope of being one time re-instated into his former Glory and Privileges.

§. III. It would be too large a Subject, if I should go to explain how this spiritual Death seized on all the Faculties of the

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the Mind, and render'd 'em utterly unfit for acting any thing agreeable to the Will of God. Will and Understanding, Reason and Passions, and all the rest of the intellectual Faculties, are struck with a dead Stupor in things of the Spirit of God; and all the Actions and Speculations proceeding from 'em have a Mark of Death stamped upon 'em. This is the Reason the Works of the Unconverted are called dead Works, and that there is Repentance from dead Works required by the Apostle. (a) This Death is of so deep a Nature, that the Works resulting from that dead State, are dead even before they are brought forth into the World; the very Conscience, and so the best Faculty left within the Soul, standing in need of being purged from dead Works, as the Apostle's Phrase is. (b) The Works don't die as they come into the World, but are dead before.

§. IV. Upon the Whole, we see that the State of fall'n Nature is drawn by the holy Pen-men in most black and odious Colours: But nothing, for ought I know, comes up more lively to this Character of being dead. This draws all the

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(a) Heb. VI. 1. (b) Heb. IX. 14.

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the rest of *Misery* after it. It entirely shuts out the Soul from any Enjoyment of the Love of God, and implieth a total Unfitness for any spiritual Performance whatsoever. In this Death is no Remembrance of God, and in this Grave, who shall give him Thanks? All the spiritual Senses lie buried as it were in Deadness and Ignorance. There is neither seeing, nor tasting of God. All the divine Promises, though in themselves full of Life and Comfort, are dead to him that is dead. The more such an one walks, (Eph. II. 2.) the farther he removes from God; the Fountain of Life; and the more he stirs and acts, the more he loadeth his Soul with dead Works. As there is Variety of Sins, so each Sin sets the Soul at a greater Distance from God, and causeth a wider Separation between God and her. (c)

S. V. This Death is of a general Extent. It seizeth on all the Works of a Man, and rendreth 'em altogether abominable in the Eye of the Lord. The more spiritual such Works seem to be, the more odious they are; nothing being more hated by God than a Show of spiritual Formalities proceeding from a Heart



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that is still dead and destitute of a living Principle. And this is the Reason that Man is now sunk lower than the very Beasts: For the more spiritual and refined Man's Mind is, the more profound are the Pollutions and Defilements that spring up from it, whilst it continueth in this State of Death and Apostacy. If this woful State of fall'n Man be not well considered in the Ministration of spiritual matters, then every thing must unavoidably be attended with most dismal Consequences: No Man being able to administer spiritual things spiritually and sufficiently, except he be acquainted at least in some degree with the State of apostate Nature, and of the Oeconomy of her Restauration introduced by Christ.

§. VI. Man may be considered in a Threefold State, according to the Three great Dispensations to which every spiritual Transaction relating to Man may be reduced. He is either under the Dominion of Sin, or the State of fall'n Nature: or he is in the State under the Law, which is a Step towards his Recovery: Or he is under the Dispensation of the Gospel, or the State of Grace, which, as it were, addeth the Crown and Top-stone to the Conversion begun under the Law.

§. VII.

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S. VII. 'Tis highly necessary for a Minister of Christ, to know the Nature and Constitution, the various Symptoms and Dangers of each of these States. Without an experimental Knowledge thereof, he will never be fit to discharge the Function of a Steward of the Mysteries of God in all its Branches and Dependencies. He will preach Comfort to such as stand in no need thereof; and will, by his un wary Management of Souls, cast them down yet lower, who were in the way of recovering out of the Snare of the Devil. He will administer the Word and Sacraments (particularly that of the Lord's-Supper) to no great Purpose. He will feed those with Spiritual Food that have no spiritual Taste to relish, nor a right Disposition to receive it. We see the Unsuccessfulness of the Word and Sacraments, though preached and dispensed every Day among Protestants. One great Reason whereof is, the indiscreet Administration in the Minister, who maketh no inward Trial of Souls; but dispenseth things at random, and without a sufficient Discernment of the State of those that hear and receive it. What can be more hurtful than to feed up a

Sin-

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Sinner with hopes of Salvation, for no other Evidence, but because he goeth to Church, and says his Prayers, and is besides a strict and honest Liver, after the common way of the World? And yet we hear these things cried up by many as the very Characteristicks of a good Christian. Whereas, perhaps, the Man is not so much as sensible of his spiritual Death and Apostacy, much less of the Life of Grace, which is the blessed Effect resulting from the Dispensation of the Gospel wisely applied to the Sinner. Now to buoy up a Man with Hopes of Salvation on so slight and slender a Foundation, is to lead him the shortest way to Hell and Damnation, and to shut him out from a saving Application of the Means of Grace, offered in the Gospel of Christ: For the Grace of God, laid open in the Gospel, cannot be duly applied to any but those that have been qualified by the previous Dispensation of the Law, which is introductory to the saving Application of the Gospel, or as the Scripture termeth it, a School-Master, who by his Severity brings us to Christ.

§. VIII. All these dangerous Steps, and a great many more, would be prevented, if the Minister, in all his Functions, did  
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but keep his Eye fixed on the main Design of the Gospel, which is, the Recovery of the spiritual Life; and, in his Application to the Hearers, did make the Application of the Evangelical Promises to such only as were in a Preparedness to receive 'em. At this rate the precious Promises of the Gospel would not be spilt on an uncultivated Ground, where, instead of Fruit, they will breed but more Weeds & wild Grapes. They would be hedged up within a certain Compass, and kept safe from the Hands of an obstinate Sinner. For was Mount Sinai not to be touch'd by the People under a Penalty of Death; why should Mount Sion, enriched with the Jewels of Gospel-Promises, be left a Prey to those that have no just Title to it?

§. IX. Another Mistake which, for want of a due Insight into the End of the Gospel, spreadeth among the vulgar sort of Christians, is an Acquiescency in an honest and moral Life, instead of a spiritual and heavenly one. The natural Man is too apt to value himself on account of a fair and an honest Conversation, and to think himself a very good Man, if he be put free from the notorious Vices of a profane Worldling, and just and square in his Dealings with his Neigh-



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Neighbour. But alas! that Man that thus flatters himself with the Shreds of some shining Moralities, entirely mistakes the End of the Gospel of Christ. The main Design of the Gospel is, not to teach us some Morals, but to raise the Soul from Death to Life. If a handful of fine Morals would serve the End of Religion, what need was there of the Gospel at all? What need was there of the blessed Incarnation of the Son of God, of his Death and Passion, and of other tremendous Mysteries, which the very Angels are desirous to look into? For instead of this, we might erect Seneca's Morals into a Standard of a good Life; and rather learn to square our Manners and Actions by his Flourishes, than by the divine Oracles recorded in the Gospel. And I fear there are but too many, whose Taste, by reading Books of this Nature, is vitiated to that Degree, that they will disdain the sweetest Promises of the Gospel, and disrelish the most majestic Truths of Scripture, because they are not adorned with so much Wit, nor set off by the modish Strains of Rhetorick. For indeed the Truth of the Gospel, and the Mysteries of Salvation therein unfolded, is of too exalted a Nature than to be brought

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*brought within the Compass of some scanty Inventions of Men : And therefore the spiritual Depth of the Gospel will be fathomed by the Spirit of God only. The Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God. A single Eye will reach deepest in the Knowledge of the Oeconomy of Man's Restauration.*

*S. X. Another unhappy Effect springing up from Peoples mistaking the END of the Gospel, is that great Neglect of the most essential Articles of Christian Religion. Our Saviour smartly reproveth the Pharisees for paying Tythe of Mint, and Anise, and Cumin, and for omitting the WEIGHTIER Matters of the Law. One that taketh an impartial Survey of the State of Christendom in this Age, cannot but bewail its tottering Condition in all Sects and Parties. For they all fall short of the Vitals and Power of Religion, in the midst of the Clamours they raise about it. There hath hardly been a greater Noise and Outcry about Church, Religion, and Orthodoxy, as there is now ; but then it is about things wherein the Kingdom of God doth not consist at all. All the Quarrels about this or that Scheme ; about this Church-Government or another,*

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ther, are so far from touching the essential Part of Christianity, that they are a Monument both of the deplorable Condition Christianity is reduced to in this Age, and of the cunning Artifice of the Enemy of Souls, who thereby diverts People from more serious Concerns about the substantial Ingredients of Religion. If the weightier Points of the Law and Gospel be wanting, then the very primitive Scheme (suppose there was any such thing left by the Apostles) will stand us in no stead, but will degenerate into an empty Sect, and be attended with all the fatal Consequences to which humane Inventions, intruded into Religion, have been exposed in all Ages. When humane Reason (such as it is after the Fall) began to tamper with Religion, and to frame Schemes, Forms and Systems of Divinity, the POWER did visibly die away, and a numberless Train of unnecessary Notions was unhappily crouded into the Church. This is plain from the Thread of History through all the Ages of the Gospel. And by this Stratagem of the Devil, the Churches have been imbroiled into most unchristian Contentions about a few By-things; which ended at last in a manifest Ruine of mutual

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*tual LOVE, the greatest of all Virtues, and so undoubtedly one of the most essential Characters of real Christianity. It would be too ample a Subject, if I should go to enumerate here the rest of such essential Articles as are in some degree lost in the Crowd of other Notions started up in the Church. 'Tis no Wonder that Deism, Naturalism, and Socinianism, spreads so visibly among Protestants, since those that maintain as yet the Divinity of Christ in a scholastick & systematical Manner, preach yet up so sparingly his divine Power & Efficacy in the Conversion of Souls.*

*S. X. The Life and Doctrines of CHRIST should be woven into all our Sermons, and read in all our Books of Divinity. For in CHRIST alone the Work of Salvation doth most wonderfully cohere, which, without it, is most miserably torn and mangled. Nothing is sweeter than to read CHRIST every where in holy Writ, and to discover the Oeconomy of Salvation by him established in the Old and New Testament. " In the Knowledge of Christ, (to use the Words of a pious \* Writer) " we have " greater Certainty than can be found " in any of all the other Knowledges. This*

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*\* Lord Ch. Just. Hale's Contemplat. Part I. p. 40.*

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## The PREFACE. xiii

“ appears out of the admirable Concor-  
 “ dance and Symmetry that this Mystery  
 “ of Christ maketh in the whole Method  
 “ of the Proceeding of God in the World ;  
 “ as will be easily observable upon the  
 “ Collation of these things together : The  
 “ Creation, the Fall, the Law, the State  
 “ of the Jews, the Immortality of the  
 “ Soul, the Necessity of a Satisfaction for  
 “ Sin if pardoned, the Types and Sacri-  
 “ fices, the Prophecies, the Rejection of  
 “ the Jews, the Calling of the Gentiles,  
 “ the Progress of the Gospel to the new-  
 “ discovered Parts of the World, succes-  
 “ sively as discovered. A due Collecti-  
 “ on being made of all these and other  
 “ Considerations, it will appear, that the  
 “ Doctrine of CHRIST JESUS, and him  
 “ crucified, is that which maketh the  
 “ Dispensation of God towards the  
 “ Children of Men to be all of a Piece,  
 “ and one thing in order to another, and  
 “ CHRIST the Mediator, in whom  
 “ God hath gathered together all things  
 “ in One, Eph. I. 10. made it as one  
 “ System, Body, Fabrick, &c. ”

§. XI. All these grand Dispensations bor-  
 row Light & Lustre from Jesus Christ, the  
 Center as it were wherein all Lines most har-  
 moniously cohere and meet together. Sin had

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*caused a dreadful Disorder in the Creation of God. Man himself was miserably shattered, and all the Faculties of his Soul put out of Tune. The Creature was made subject to Vanity, in which fall'n Condition she now groaneth, & endeavours to rid herself from the Bondage of Corruption. But since God hath been pleased to gather all things together in Christ, as the HEAD, 'tis from hence plain, 'tis HE that animateth and influenceth the whole Work of Restauration in its various Branches, Degrees, and successive Operations; removing at the same time such Obstacles as obstruct the blessed Union of Man with God, and of God with Man: By Him are reconciled all things, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven: (e) For Man being now, by the heinous Affection of God's Sovereignty, become an utter Enemy of God, (f) he is also at Enmity with all such Angels as faithfully adhered to their Sovereign, and to the original Purity wherein they were created at first. All these Animosities are now happily removed by the Blood of Christ, and Man reconciled to God, to his Angels, and to other Men belonging to his Family.*

S. XII.

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(e) Col. I. 20. (f) Rom. VIII. 7.

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**S. XII.** All these marvellous Transactions make up the most essential Branches of the Word of Reconciliation, committed to such as are Ambassadors for Christ: But how little these things are known, even by many of those that pretend to be vested with that Dignity, is too large a Subject to be insisted upon here. As the End of the Gospel is the Recovery of the divine Life, and the Reconciliation of our Soul with God following it; 'tis but fit, all the Endeavours and Labours of a Minister of the Gospel, should have a direct Tendency to so great a Work. For if this End be neglected, then for certain the Terms of Reconciliation offered by the Lord on his behalf, will be neglected also, and prove altogether fruitless at last. The Return of our Soul to God is not on so easie Terms, as many of our Christians imagine. We know that Adam, and in him all his Posterity, turned flat Rebels against the Laws of Creation. The longer People continue in this rebellious Condition, the blacker is the Guilt they contract, and consequently the greater is the Distance betwixt God and them. This is the Reason the Soul must undergo so many Operations, till she attain to the End of the Gospel at last, and hereby to a safe

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*and sure Reconciliation with God. But as the Dispensation of the Law, and of the Gospel, are the two great Hinges on which real Christianity moveth; so their distinct Effects will fuller appear from comparing one with the other.*

§ XIII. *The Dispensation of the Law is preliminary, preparatory, and introductory to the Gospel. The Dispensation of the Gospel is applicatory of the divine Promises, and actually conferring that Grace which the Soul hungered after under the Law. This is done by the Means of FAITH on Man's Side. By the Work of the Law, Man arriveth to a spiritual Knowledge of Sin, (for the Law is spiritual, Rom. VII. 14. and requireth spiritual Duties) that so he may the more earnestly lay hold on Christ represented in the Gospel, as the Repairer of our Breaches and Fulfiller of the Law. Under the Law, a Man is brought to a spiritual Sorrow, Confession, and Brokenness of Heart; that so he may reject Sin with the greater Abhorrency hereafter, and relish the better the Love of God shed abroad in the Heart under the Dispensation of the Gospel. Under the Law, his Mind is disquieted, and tossed up and down by various Doubts and Perplexities; that he*  
may



## The PREFACE. xvii

may value the better the Rest promised under the Gospel, when he ceaseth from the Days of Toil and Labour. The Law, by its spiritual Sense, strips the Soul from any Reliance on external Things and Performances. The Gospel cloaths him with the Garment of Salvation, and the Robe of Righteousness. The Law puts him to Shame and Confusion, as not daring to lift up his Face to the Lord, because of his Transgressions: But the Gospel inspireth him with a filial Confidence, and maketh him approach the Throne of Grace with a holy Boldness. The Law arraigns him as an Offender before that divine Tribunal, which after an impartial scrutiny of all internal and external Actions, passeth the Sentence of Death upon him: But the Gospel stepping in, justifieth the Sinner found guilty: It declareth the Love of God towards repenting Sinners, and bath the Judge's Pardon in its Hands. The Law discovers the corrupted Bent of the Heart: But the Gospel overcometh it. The Law represents a Man like a barren Tree, and threatens to destroy him Root and Branch: But the Gospel ingrafts him into CHRIST, wherein, as in a kind Soil, he brings forth Fruits of the Spirit.

## xviii The PREFACE.

§. XIV. Thus is the Law in all its Operations a School-Master unto Christ, whose reigning and condemning Power expireth as soon as CHRIST begins to be the free and vital Principle in the Soul. He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life. (g) And these are Operations of the Law and of the Gospel, essentially and intrinsically required for establishing the Work of Conversion on a firm and unshaken Foundation.

§. XV. Another unhappy Mistake of not minding the End of Christian Religion is the Neglect of rightly distinguishing betwixt divine and humane Convictions in matters of Religion. By Conviction, I understand a strong Impression upon the Mind, evidencing the divine Authority of Christian Religion, and fortifying the Soul against all the Oppositions of Gain-sayers. These Convictions are either derived from the Spirit of God himself, and from his various Operations within the Soul; and then they fall under the Denomination of divine Convictions. Or, they are fetched from more national Directions, as from the Consent of Antiquity, and the Agreement of the Pri-

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(g) 1 John V. 12.

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## The PREFACE. xix

mitive Writers, & of the Catholick Church in all Ages, from Councils, Confessions, Canons, Liturgies, Old Customs, and the whole Extent of Power and Authority Men may take upon them in matters of Religion. And then we may justly call 'em humane Convictions. Of the same Weight are the Convictions Men receive from Parents, Masters, Teachers in Churches and Schools, and from the Education they have from those to whose Care they are committed. To these may be added, the Dignity and Greatness of eminent Men; their Parts, Gifts, Learning, Eloquence, and other Helps Men may acquire by their own Industry. All these things beget nothing but humane Convictions, and are destitute of a divine Light and Evidence. As the Stream doth not move above its Fountain-Head; so it cannot be expected these rational Discussions should rise above the Principles whence they spring. The Impression they leave upon the Soul, is slight, uncertain, partial, and altogether unable to compose the Mind in the midst of so many Doubts and Perplexities, Errors and Delusions as are apt to beset us on all Hands.

§.XVI. We know how all the Parties of Christendom lay hold on all these Prerogatives,

## XX The PREFACE.

tives, and particularly that Church, where-  
in humane Authority is raised to too emi-  
nent a Pitch, and those that adhere to it  
are led by blind Obedience. Protestants  
therefore ought not to dwell on Evidences  
subject to so many Uncertainties, and ar-  
gued pro and con by the Favourers of the  
various Schemes and Parties set up in  
Christendom. I say, they should not dwell  
on, or acquiesce in them; but endeavour  
to improve them to a higher End. For some  
of the said Evidences, though humane in  
themselves, may yet prove introductory to a  
sublimier and more divine Conviction,  
which alone is able to free the Mind from  
Doubts and Perplexities.

S. XVII. As for these divine Convicti-  
ons they are only learned in the School of the  
Spirit of God. They are only tasted by such  
Souls as are duly qualified for receiving  
them. Those taste and see how gracious  
God is, and are thereby infinitely more  
convinced of the Reality of the Christian  
Religion, than by any humane Inferences  
and Conclusions. They are made Partakers  
of that Unction which teaches all things, and  
can teach no Lie. As the Grace of God  
teacheth them to deny Ungodliness and  
worldly Lusts; so it preparath them by  
this first Lesson, to dive, in time, into the  
sub-



# The PREFACE. xxi

sublimier Mysteries of Salvation. These Convictions are not confined to great Scholars, acute Reasoners, refined Wits, or Men of great Parts and Reading. They are of an universal Extent. He that is of a mean Extraction hath as great a Right to them as Men of the highest Stations. 'Tis a Gift which entirely comes from above, and displays it self in every such Soul, as by Faith and Repentance is made fit to receive it. The History of the Primitive Times abounds with the sweetest Instances of such Men, Women and Children; as not only joyfully suffered the Loss of their Goods, but even rejoiced, to seal with their Blood, the Verity of these Convictions. An illiterate Man, if he be furnished with these divine Convictions, hath nobler Evidences of the TRUTH of the Christian Religion, than the greatest Scholar destitute of this Testimony of the Spirit. It becometh therefore a sincere Christian to be more concerned about the supernatural Convictions of the Spirit, than such Demonstrations as are barely fetched from Reason and natural Deductions: For 'tis the Spirit that beareth Witness, that the Spirit is Truth (b).

§. XVIII. Another Mistake springing up from too slight a Consideration of the End

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(b) 1 John V. 6.

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## xxii The PREFACE.

of Christian Religion, is the overvaluing of rational Arguments, and the undervaluing of spiritual ones. This is the unhappy Offspring of the foregoing Mistake, and most destructive to the Power of Religion. JESUS CHRIST, who is the Author of Religion himself, is also willing to propagate it by his Spirit, and to give most unexceptionable Proofs of its Preeminence, Reality and Dignity beyond any Religion in the World. There are Plenty of Promises, whereby the Lord ingageth his Word, that the same Spirit, who is a Spirit of Truth, shall also guide us into all Truth, shall testify of Christ, glorify him, and the Oeconomy of Salvation, whereof he is the Author. All these gracious Promises, and a great many more, relating to the Operations of the Spirit of God, are not confined to the first Ages of the Gospel, but are to attend the Church of Christ through all Ages and Revolutions, and under all inward and outward Trials and Temptations that can befall her. This inward Work of the Spirit of God, conspiring with the Testimony of Scripture, is the safest Guard against all the Delusions of the latter Times; and the unerring Compass whereby to steer our Course in the midst of the most dangerous Rocks and Waves. But as fall'n Man is now subject to all manner of Errors and Prejudices, so he hath the greater Reason to be upon his Guard, lest he be drawn aside either on the right Hand or on the left. Errors are then more pernicious, when they appear under a spiritual Disguise, and slide into Peoples Minds under a Cover of Truth and Goodness. They then become spiritual Wickednesses in high Places, and are the more dangerous, the deeper the

## The PREFACE. xxiii

they seize on the interiour Regions of the Mind. But this ought not to make us cast off at all the Operations of the divine Spirit, but to render us more watchful only, lest we take in some counterfeit Inspirations, instead of real & substantial ones.

§. XIX. The Reason why People adhere so much to rational Arguments concerning the Authority of the Christian Religion, instead of the Testimony of the Spirit of God himself, is the Neglect of considering aright the END of the Christian Religion. This consists in a Recovery of the spiritual Life, and is for that Purpose raised on spiritual Principles, as ly out of the Reach of humane Reason and Endeavours. At least must rational Arguments be contented with a secondary Place among the Evidences of the Christian Religion. For the natural Man (that is, a Man adorned with all Learning, Wit, Arts and Sciences humane Endeavours, by all Study and Application, may attain to) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. For the things of God, and the Mysteries of Salvation, knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God himself, which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. And therefore it remains, that spiritual and supernatural Mysteries, must be searched into by a spiritual Eye, that is, such an Eye as by the Principle of Regeneration is at least in some degree proportioned to the Maxims of Christianity. All other Attempts will, without this, prove altogether fruitless, and be spent to no Purpose in the Pursuit after Happiness.

§. XX. The Treatise here offered to the Reader, contains a Collection of such Thoughts as have a Tendency to the End and main Design of  
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## xxiv The PREFACE.

the Christian Religion, & so I thought the foregoing general Hints might help to illustrate some of the Meditations here annexed. For truly, if the END of Christian Religion was but duly pondered, abundance of Errors would then most happily be avoided, and the Means designed to compass the End, would be more proportioned to the End it self. Many new-fangled Doctrines, which are a Stain to Christianity, would die in their very Infancy. Many Strifes would be laid aside, and deemed as too weak in a Matter of so great an Importance as the END of Christian Religion is. False Enthusiasm, whereby the Means of Grace are undervalued, the Study of the divinest Scriptures neglected, and People hurried away into Delusions and Fancies, without the least real Impression, would be suppress'd. Fanaticism, or too stiff an Adherency to a peculiar Set of Formalities, & a Rigidity to maintain all the Punctilio's thereof with Might and Main, (which is the proper Import of the Word Fanatick) would be restrained, and many other Advantages, tending to advance the Cause of Religion, would be reap'd from so useful a Consideration.

§. XXI. But to return to the following small Tracts; the Reader is to know, that the Author published some of 'em before, chiefly those that relate to the Promotion of the Interest of the Church universal, and for this Reason contain most common Principles of Piety: The Practice whereof he thought the likeliest way to re-establish Religion on a solid Foundation. As for the MEDITATIONS in particular; the Papers left by the Author would have afforded Matter enough to have swelled the Book into a far lar-



## The PREFACE. xxv

ger Size: But as they were set down in several Languages, I would publish no more at present than those the Author had writ in English, except perhaps Two or Three I have made English from another Language.

§. XXII. I do not design to make any Apology, either for the Immodishness of the Stile, or some other Trips or Defects that may adhere to it. An Apology of this Nature, I should look upon as a Piece of over-*efficiency* in him that did publish a spiritual Book; and as a Piece of Vanity in the Reader, if he should require it. A plain and experimental Truth of Christianity, stands in no need of borrowing Lustre from the cold and languid Inventions of Men. He that hath attained an inward Gust of the Work of Grace, is the only competent Judge of the things of the Spirit of God, which will continue Foolishness to them that perish, in spite of all the fine Language wherewith Men may adorn them. However, I have now and then taken the Freedom to set some Passages in a clearer Light, by an Addition of a few Words; for no other End, than to fit 'em thereby for the Capacity of the meanest Reader. The same Method I have taken in revising his Projects about promoting Catholick Piety among Christians: some Paragraphs whereof I have endeavoured to make plainer, by adding a few Hints from the Manuscripts of the Author, left to my Disposal at his Decease. Not to mention other small Alterations, which I was obliged to make, in order to prepare the Book, as well as I could, for Publick View.

§. XXIII. I had once a Thought to have sorted the Meditations into some Order, by reducing 'em

## xxvi The PREFACE.

to their distinct Titles, or proper Heads: But, upon second Thoughts, I waved this Piece of Nicety, and would rather leave 'em as an open Field, to the free and full View of the Reader, than hedge 'em up within any artificial Inclosures. A Field interspersed with a Mingle and Variety of Flowers is now and then more pleasing to the Eye, than a Garden cultivated by all the fine Methods the Industry of Men is able to contrive.

§.XXIV. Most of the Meditations here presented to the Reader, have been penned by the Author in the midst of his Travels, and so are the Product of many tiresome Steps he underwent for the Good of his Fellow-Creatures. This appears from the Journal he kept for that Purpose: For having first set down his Arrival to such and such a Place, with a few Circumstances relating to his outward Affairs; he generally subjoined a divine Meditation on a Passage of Scripture, or some other practical Subject, suggested to him by the good Spirit of God. Which shows, that the common Fatigues and Incumbrances, incident to such a Life, could not divert his Mind from more serious Contemplations, or from the Pursuit of that ONE thing necessary, so highly recommended in the Gospel of Christ. It may likewise convince us, that it is not impossible for a Christian to enjoy an inward Calm & Tranquillity in the midst of the ordinary trivial things of this World, and that the Removal of the Body from worldly Noise, is not always the safest Means to obtain a quiet Serenity and Evenness of Spirit.

May the LORD, in his infinite Mercy, second all our Endeavours, by his Spirit, for the Increase of his Knowledge upon Earth; for the Inlargement of Christ's Kingdom among us, and the Comfort and Edification of his Children in the midst of so many Disorders and just Judgments now beginning to gather over the Christian World!

# MEDITATIONS UPON RETIREMENT FROM THE WORLD;

Occasioned by a

*Discourse with a Gentleman,*  
Who began to see the VANITY  
of Worldly Enjoyments, whereof he  
had a very great Share, and thought  
it necessary, by despising of 'em, to  
secure the Interest of his Soul, while  
there was any Time left for it.

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*Blessed are they that forsake the World for  
Heaven ; but more blessed are they that find  
Heaven before they go out of the World.*

*There is no more Difference between Heaven  
and the Kingdom of God, than there is be-  
tween Hell and the Kingdom of Darkness.*

*Heaven consists in Virtue, TRUTH and Light ;  
Hell consists in Vice, Lies and Darkness.*

*Our Saviour leads us the way to Heaven, and  
the Devil directs People to Hell.*

*The Reader may consider which of these Two he  
had best to follow.*

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The Second Edition.

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Printed in the Year MDCCXII.

REFLECTIONS

UPON

RETIREMENT

FROM THE

WORLD

OF THE

DISSENTING

MINISTRY

IN THE

REPUBLIC

OF THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

BY

WILLIAM

CHURCHMAN

OF THE

DISSENTING

MINISTRY

IN THE

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TO HIS  
Royal HIGHNESS  
PRINCE  
GEORGE  
OF  
DENMARK.

**T**HE nearer You are to Crown  
and Scepter, the more Regard  
You ought to have to Him whose Vice-  
gerents Kings and Princes are. By  
your Indifferency about Worldly Af-  
fairs, Providence hath disposed You  
to despise the World, and to give your  
Heart to God, who hath unexpressi-  
ble Happiness and Contentment ready

iv The Epistle Dedicatory.

*for those, that with an entire Resignation comply with his Will.*

*If the following Meditations have any such Effect upon your Mind, as to strengthen your Love to the Ruler of Hearts; He will never let You want those Affections of the People, which distinguish and support a Prince's Greatness; and I shall certainly see my Wishes and Hopes of the Growth and Continuance of your Prosperity fulfilled.*

*When You see the present Broils of Europe make way for great Changes in Church and State; then believe that God will rescue those that fear, love and trust Him, and that You are One of the few great Ones, not to be touched by the general Calamities, which the unusual Earthquakes and other Signs of God's approaching Anger do fore-bode.*

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# MEDITATIONS

## UPON

# RETIREMENT

From the

# WORLD.

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### MEDITATION I.

**T**HE World is an Imperious Mistress, who makes those most uneasie that are fondest of her. This hath induced several to prefer *RETIREMENT* before Greatness and Splendor in the World, after they have found the Emptiness of all those

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## 6 MEDITATIONS

things, which men commonly make their Idols: Providence having contrived it so wisely, that, whosoever hath a wrong Aim in point of Happiness, is sooner or later made sensible of his having missed the Mark. All the Mischief cometh from *misplacing our Affections*, and from not bestowing a true value upon the things we are in pursuit after. If we did but remember the *seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven*, we should soon find fulfilled the *All things shall be added unto you*: Since a hearty Concern for a future Life, would make us look with so much Contempt upon the Trifles of this World, that we would hardly ever disquiet our selves with the Desire of any thing, that is not added to us already. But such a *Resignation to Providence*, requireth perhaps more Religion, than is commonly met with among Men now adays.

However we all pretend to *Reason*, and those that are not totally deprived of the right Use of Reason, will own, that they have an immortal Soul, and that consequently the *securing Eternity to the Soul*, is not only the most important Business, but that  
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*upon* RETIREMENT. 7

without the Hopes thereof, our Mind will not be free from grudgings, very injurious to its Quiet and Contentment ; and which, whilst they disorder the Mind, will also influence the Health of our Body very much. So that Reason should tell every man, he must look after Heaven if he will enjoy Happiness on Earth, which cannot subsist, without Health in the Body, and Tranquillity in the Mind : GOD's Goodness as well as Wisdom having ordered it so, that the Tie of *Body, Mind, and Soul,* be so closely united, that they mutually share in one another's Interest.

An hearty *Concern for the Soul* will on one hand bring us to an Observance of our Saviour's Rules, and a Practice of these Virtues, whereby both the Vigour of our Body, and the Contentment of our Mind is promoted : And on the other, a due *Management of the Body,* according to the Precepts of Temperance and Sobriety, will strengthen our Understanding also, and enable it to descry in Nature and Providence, those glorious Beams of Wisdom and Goodness, which cannot but inflame our Desires of obtaining  
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## 8 MEDITATIONS

the Favour of that Infinite Perfect Being. And this Desire, if it be sincere and earnest, is half way towards our Soul's home.

This Consideration alone should be enough, to keep rational Men from bestowing any more Value upon the Goods and Pleasures of *this* World, than is consistent with a due Care of the *next*. Which if they did, they would not be weary of Earth before they are fitted for Heaven. And then even earthly Pleasures of Body as well as of Mind, would be more real, more lasting, and more easily attained. They would not be at a loss where to find Rest and *Retirement*. For, in my Opinion, 'tis not changing of City or Court for the Country, wherein a quiet Retirement consists: Because in the greatest Solitude and most concealed Recess, our Mind may be hurried about with restless Passions, and anxious Desires. Neither can the Noise of the City, nor the Hurry of the Court, discompose a Temper well settled. But then I understand by a *well-settled Temper*, such a Frame of Mind as doth not depend upon Uncertainties, but relieth in-

## UPON RETIREMENT. 9

intirely on GOD's Providence, which designs nothing but Good for us. However it cannot be denied, that every body is not strong enough, to resist the Temptations of City and Court, which too often wheedle us into wrong and dangerous Courses.

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### MEDITATION II.

SINCE the *Retirement*, which is to set our Mind at Ease, doth not consist in the bare changing of the Place of our Abode; it seems to me, that the Secret of enjoying Quiet and Tranquillity of Mind, consists only in *withdrawing our HEART from any thing we are in Possession of in this World*. This is the way to hold *Riches and Honour*, nay, even that more valuable Pleasure of *Friendship*, without the Uneasiness of fearing to lose them, or grieving for them, when they give us the Slip. It is a common Observation, that *Sin and Folly* differ but very little; and that the Wisdom of Providence hath put a strait Connexion between *Sin and Punishment*. So that whosoever forgets

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## 10 MEDITATIONS

his Duty to his Creator to such a Degree, as to lay him by for the Creature, and to bestow upon the Creature those Affections which were due only to the Creator ; that Person, I say, must needs expose himself to a great many Inconveniencies, which, by God's unchangeable Law, will unavoidably attend the committing of such a Sin and Folly.

We daily see, that wise Men make themselves ridiculous about these worldly Objects, which they most dote upon ; and never make a worse Use of their Understanding, than when they are busied about the things they love best : *LOVE* as well as other Passions leading commonly their Mistress, the *REASON*, by the Nose. The Proverb, *Love is blind*, is of a far larger Extent, than to be understood only of admiring a Woman. For we see Parents, fond of their Children, not only overvalue their Parts, but by too much Indulgence to the Humour of their Children, expose themselves to the just Censures of discreet and impartial Persons. We meet with bookish Men, passed up with some Philological Re-

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upon RETIREMENT. 11

marks on old Authors, that are his-  
sed at by Men of Sense, as being of  
no Use either to Church or State.  
Both *Children* and *Books* are undoubt-  
edly as harmless *Objects* of our Fan-  
cy as any; and yet when our Heart  
is set upon them, they easily betray  
our Folly, and bring no less an In-  
convenience upon us, than the lessen-  
ing of our Reputation, by having  
our Judgment called in Question.

As an irrational Love of sensual  
Pleasures, Money and Fame is more  
criminal, so it is attended with a Pu-  
nishment more real, than the bare  
Loss of the good Opinion of Men of  
Sense. I do not speak only of Men  
that pursue those things by commit-  
ting the most provoking Sins, but  
even of those that hunt after them,  
in a Course seemingly honest. A  
Man may endeavour to grow rich,  
without robbing and cheating: An-  
other may offer at Preferment and  
Greatness, without flandering or sup-  
planting his Neighbour: And yet  
both these Men will find themselves  
mistaken at the long run, if they  
make this their *chief End and Business*.  
And therefore it is a Mercy of God,  
when

## 12 MEDITATIONS

when he shews them their Error, and directs them to look more after that which alone must render the Enjoyment of Plenty and Greatness secure and comfortable. This cannot be obtained, unless a Body be sure of *God's Favour* and Support. But then 'tis not probable, that God Almighty should afford a Man so great a Blessing, unless he thinks it worth the longing for it ; which he is not like to do, as long as his Mind chiefly runs upon worldly Things and Concerns.

Wherefore I conclude, that *withdrawing our HEART from worldly Things, is the true Retirement*, leading us to Calmness of Mind, and keeping us from being disturbed in the City and Court, as well as in the Country. Nay, it will beget that Love and Trust in God, which makes Prosperity the more comfortable, and Adversity the less uneasy : And when our Crosses seem to overballance too much our Comforts ; this sort of Retirement will make us amends for all, by a promising Prospect of our future Happiness.

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MEDITATION III.

**I**T is, I must confess, not so very easie, to *withdraw our Heart from the World*; for it is hard to blot out the Impressions made upon our Minds in younger Years. One that always heard People admired for a great *Estate*, for a splendid House-keeping, and magnificent Furniture and Retinue, will be backward to believe, that all those Things signifie nothing, and are not worth our seeking them. We hear great Men so often reckoned among the *Fortunate*; and we often see so very many Advantages of *Power*, that we cannot help our being almost betrayed into Ambition. Nay, when bountiful Nature hath bestowed so good an Understanding upon us, as to be convinced, that *Wealth* and *Greatness* are very empty things without Contentedness of Mind, there is still one *Object* left, from which 'tis hardest of all to withdraw the Heart; and that is, *We our selves*.

The wise Author of Nature hath implanted in us a Love of our Being, that we might seek to preserve and

## 14 MEDITATIONS

to improve it. And there is no Question to be made, but that it would stand us in very great stead, if we loved our selves with a *due Regard to our glorious Maker*: For it is more than probable, that our Being may be improved by him, who so artificially contrived it. But when we lay *HIM* aside, and perhaps do every thing to affront him into the Bargain; it is no Wonder he should revenge so base an Ingratitude, by suffering our *Self-Love* to be a blind Guide unto us. This perverse *Self-Love* begets that Uncharitableness and Envy, from whence springs all the Strife and Faction which so visibly disturbs both publick and private Affairs. It intoxicates us with a *Conceit* of and Reliance upon our own Judgment, that we will hardly allow any Body to be in the Right but our selves, making commonly very ungrateful Requitals to those that offer to shew us our Mistakes. In one Word: *Self-Love* is the Root of Pride, which is so criminal a Qualification, that it turned *Lucifer* out of Heaven.

The enlightened Author of *The Whole Duty of Man* makes very good  
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*upon* RETIREMENT. 15

Remarks upon this Subject. Nor can it be denied, that the greater the thing is, which we are proud of, the greater is the Sin committed, and consequently the Fall too, which generally attends Pride and Self-Love. The Mischief we do by being pleased with our own Person, is not so great, as when we think our Judgment infallible. Our being puffed up with a vain Conceit of *Saintship*, is worse still, and very often occasions those *false Lights*, whereby many a poor Soul is led away into Precipices. The Reason seems to be, that *Pride* hath *Ingratitude* towards God at the Bottom: For the proud Man doth not reflect upon his holding every thing of God Almighty. And the greater his Gifts are, the greater is his Ingratitude, when he ascribes them to himself.

Since then *Self-Love* is so dangerous, and yet so natural to us; we ought to strive against it with the greater Care and Watchfulness, in order to break our selves of this *Fondness of SELF*, the last and most obstinate Enemy to overcome. But then none is sensible of the Power of  
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## 16 MEDITATIONS

this Enemy, but he who would fain enjoy that quiet Retirement, wherein we shall not be displeased with any thing, but what displeases God Almighty himself.

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### MEDITATION IV.

**S**UCH a Disengagement of our Hearts from all worldly Affections fits us for that *Love* whereby we endear our selves to God, and receive reciprocal Returns from him. This will bring us in time to so much Experience of his Mercy, that we never despond, even under the worst Circumstances, but learn to bear the hardest Lot of his Providence without Reluctancy. It would be strange, if God Almighty, who hath given us innumerable Proofs of his Goodness, should look with Indifferency upon those, that endeavour to answer his *Design* in creating of Man, and endowing him with Reason and Understanding. If we think we have a sufficient Cause to lessen our Kindness towards a Person, which

*upon* RETIREMENT. 17.

which doth love another besides us :  
How can we imagine, that that infinite Being should take it well at our Hands, when we so kindly entertain some despicable Rivals besides him ?

Many pious Persons hold, that God created Man only *to be a Witness of his Wonders*, viz. to admire and enjoy the Beauty of the whole Creation ; and, after Man had by his Ingratitude forfeited so great a Happiness, and by *Disobedience* brought that sad Punishment upon him, which hath made his Posterity smart ever since ; yet that God even then was pleased to give still a greater Proof of his Love, in pitying Man's deplorable Condition, and providing a most admirable *Means* for his Relief. What is not such an infinite Goodness like to do for one, who is sensible of so unspeakable a Mercy, and with a due Acknowledgment of his own Unworthiness, makes it his utmost Care to please the Creator, or to answer the *End* of his Creation and Redemption ? If we make never so few Christian Reflexions upon the Course he takes with us, we will soon find, that he even courts us by all the  
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## 18 MEDITATIONS

Methods imaginable, in order to gain our Heart: And when they do not prevail, he *imbitters* the Enjoyment of those very things which are apt to steal in upon us, and to withdraw our Hearts from him.

He doth not deserve so great a Favour as *Affliction*, that doth not look upon it as a Design of God Almighty, to *wean us* thereby from those things which rendered us treacherous to him. Our Mind will needs have something chiefly to delight in and to please it self with. Now what *Object* soever it inclines to, at this it will grasp closer and closer every Day. If it bend towards the *World*, it will there intangle it self faster and faster, and consequently remove farther and farther from God. But if the Mind be once fixed upon *God*, it will despise the *World* more and more, and delight in nothing at last but in God and Heaven. The more our Love tends this Way, the more our Expectations seeking after Happiness, will be answered. This Love will, by degrees, bring us to so firm a Union with God, that  
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*upon* RETIREMENT. 19

the fiercest Temptation shall not tear us from him.

When God once finds us but true to him, he gives us an Assurance of his being true to us, and then nothing will be able to shake us, or to grieve us. At length we shall attain to such an Intimacy with him, as *to have no other Will but his*, and with an entire Resignation to bear his Disposals. And 'tis then we begin to see Wonders of *Wisdom, Goodness, Mercy and Justice*, even in those Events, which the World thinks meer *Chance*. We shall then be convinced, that the more we seek Heaven, the more we are like to find Happiness even upon Earth: Whereas our seeking for and pursuing after the Trifles of the Earth, makes us lose Heaven it self, and doth nothing but trouble and imbroid us whilst we are upon Earth. So that in my Opinion, it is *Prudence* as well as *Religion*, to give our Heart to God, and not to the World: For then I am sure, the Vanity of the World will never make us uneasie; nay, we shall then be freed from those puzzling Searches where to find that Tranquillity and Chearfulness of Mind, which

## 20 MEDITATIONS

which may sweeten our Life whilst we are here, and give us a Foretast of that which we are to enjoy hereafter.

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### MEDITATION V.

— **L**EST any Body should think these Notions to be insignificant Whims of my own Brain; I advise to examine impartially whether they be not agreeable to what was said before by one, whose Wisdom and Truth no Christian can have an Exception against. There is scarce another Sense to be given to those Words of our Saviour's Apostle, whereby he declares, *That the Love of the Father is not in us, as long as we love the World.* But if People will not mind the Doctrine of the Lord, how can they wonder at their not finding the Truth and Benefit of it? Withdrawing our Heart from the World, and giving it to God, supposeth an *entire forsaking* of every thing opposite to the divine Love; and then we have the Promise of an Hundredfold's Recompence attending

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ing us. But no Body is like to gain a happy Experience of this Truth, that doth not think it worth while to make a Trial of it. Tho' I am of Opinion, the Truth of this matter will be called in question by no Body, who owns the *Bible* to contain the Word of God.

The Number indeed of those is very great, who think it beneath 'em to submit their Understanding to the Wisdom of God. Not to speak of those who count *David* a Fool, for calling those *Fools*, who say in their Heart : *There is no God*. But as these *Meditations* are designed only for the Improvement of real Christianity; so I don't think it worth while to go about confuting such Errors. I dare assure my self, that any Person, who will earnestly endeavour for Christ's Sake to *forsake his Life*, will, by God's Blessing, find a far better one. As we have not yet been in the other World, we can speak but little by Experience of what we may expect there. But this I know for certain, that the forsaking of those Courses, which set us more and more at a greater Distance from God, will, by degrees, bring

bring us to a Life even here on Earth, which is not only free from Disquiet and Fear, but wherein also natural Pleasures are easie, and yet the Thought of their Loss pleasant too.

I shall never be perswaded to embrace the sottish Conceit of those, that suppose all the Pleasures of the Body, to be nothing else but *Snares* and Trials for the Soul, and the more spiritual Part; and upon that account deny their Bodies not only Recreation, but Necessaries also. It is too low a Fancy to imagine, that so infinite a Goodness, as that of the Almighty, can take Delight in making us uneasie: And I have Reason to believe, that the boundless Liberality of the Creator desireth nothing of us, but an *humble and grateful Enjoyment of what is given*; being so ready to grant the Desires of those that love him, that they can scarce thank him for one Mercy received, but there is another and a more considerable one to be bestowed on them. Tho' at the same time I am afraid, there are not over many that have an experimental Sense of this Matter; since there are so few, that think it worth while,



while, by a hearty Contempt of the World, to endeavour after a little more familiar Acquaintance with God's Goodness than what is usual.

As these *Meditations* are not fit for such as had rather live like Beasts than Men; so those that pay some Respect to Reason and Christianity, will be backward to condemn me too rashly for an *Enthusiast*, especially if they should not offer to measure other Peoples Corn by their own Bushel. They will rather humbly suppose, that their own Experience is no sufficient Test of all heavenly Operations, and that they may be exceeded as well in Virtue as in Vice by others; consequently, that they must not think themselves in Possession of too great a Share of those Blessings, which are promised to Virtue and Piety, in this Life as well as in the next.

## MEDITATION VI.

THIS *new Life*, which without any Paradox may be called the *Beginning of the Eternal Life*, is so unspeakable a Happiness, that no Body ought to stick at readily forsaking the *old corrupted Life* on its account. *St. Paul* had so contemptible an Opinion of this, that he did not think it worth the Name of *Life*, when he desired to be *delivered of the Body of Death*. Any solid Christian can give so far an experimental Description of it, that it puts a happy Period to the unfortunate Jarrings between the *Passions, Reason and Faith*; which most desperately disturb a Man in the old Life. Whereas all the Faculties of our Mind do in the new Life most wonderfully conspire, and move in such a sweet *Harmony*, that *Reason* will command the *Appetite and Passions*, with so absolute and yet so indulgent a Sway, that both *Appetite and Passions* afford nothing but Pleasure, and such a Pleasure too, as leaves no Sting or Remorse behind but even increaseth as the Enjoyment it self increaseth.

Reason

*Reason*, on the other hand, acts with that humble Regard to the divine Majesty, from whence it hath its Rise, that it willingly submits to *FAITH*, and to all the unsearchable Mysteries and Dispensations of God, far above any Understanding, darkened by the general Corruption of Mankind. However, the more we endeavour by the Grace of God to shake off that Corruption, the more will also this Veil of Ignorance, hanging over the Eyes of our Understanding, fall off; and then we shall be enabled to see, by degrees, that *Faith* is no intollerable Mistress to *Reason*, but that the Perfection of Reason consists in submitting to the divine Truth, and to the Reality of divine Mysteries.

It is true, it would be great Presumption in any Man to attempt by his own Forces the Recovery of that Perfection, which was forfeited by the first Man's Ingratitude: But since God's infinite Mercy hath provided a Mediator for our Restauration, it is the greatest Wonder to me, that there can be such Wretches, as will neglect and mock that, for which no humane Tongue or Understanding

## 26 MEDITATIONS

can find proportionable Thanks. I must confess, the Generality of Christians are so little behind hand with the Jews, in despising of our Saviour, that they boggle as much as those at the Truth of our Lord's Affavation, *That no Body ever should see Death that kept his Sayings.* But how can any Body be enabled to keep these Sayings or Commandments, if he will not take his Refuge to him whose Merit and Intercession must procure him the necessary Help for it?

Since then eternal Life, or at least the Beginning thereof, consisting in a *New Life* here upon Earth, can be only attained to by *keeping of Christ's Sayings*, or by following of his Example; 'tis therefore absolutely necessary, sincerely to desire, and earnestly to endeavour the Practice of those Virtues wherein the Lord himself hath placed our *Blessedness*, and made them the Subject of all his Discourses, tho' he knew the World such a Stranger to them, that he thought it necessary to bespeak their Attention by Similitudes and Parables. will not waste Time and Paper in



upon RETIREMENT. 27

summing up and describing the Loveliness and Usefulness of those Virtues. He that practises 'em, is the only Man that *keepeth Christ's Commandments*. And this Practice the Lord taketh as a Sign of our Belief in, and Love of Christ ; for which he promiseth that inexpressible Reward, *that God will love us, come to us, make his Abode with, and manifest himself unto us*, John XIV.

Those that think our Saviour too plain in recommending of these Virtues, may read the *Whole Duty of Man*, where they are treated of more *methodically*, and in a Stile more suitable to the Temper of the Times. But I am afraid, there is now such a proud stubborn Generation in the World, as would hardly have Patience to hear one talk of *God's Will*, tho' he should comply with all the Fashions of the World, that are not directly opposite to the Will of God. For since such a one must needs appear among the Wicked, and comply in some things, People would, by reason of this very Compliance, think him as far from being a Prophet, as they thought the

## 28 MEDITATIONS

Prophets of old to be, by Reason of the Austerity of their Manners, and their utter Abhorrency of the Fashions of the World. But God will confound at last the vain Conceit of the World, together with all her Shifts and Evasions, by not confining his Providence to the Notions of humane Wisdom.

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### MEDITATION VII.

**T**HE damned Pride of humane Wisdom is indeed come to that pass, that People will hardly allow the *Almighty's Prerogative*, by his uncontrollable Providence to govern this World. We have a daily Experience of God's disappointing the Subtlety of Mens Designs, and of embroiling but more the seeming Success of the crafty, which his unsearchable Counsel permits sometimes. And yet we are generally so far from reflecting more upon God's Wisdom, than upon our own Brain, that we fancy we are able to baffle the Disposal of an infinite Power.

But

*upon* RETIREMENT. 29

But the Lord, I think, hath connived long enough at the Boldness of Men, in order to convince 'em of his extraordinary Mercy, and to keep 'em from thinking those Judgments too severe, which, it seems, begin to come upon Earth, and which will fall heavy enough upon those who have hitherto laughed at the Threatnings of God's Word, and put away far from 'em the evil Day.

It is not my Task, by these Meditations, to explain the first Part of the *Lord's-Prayer*, and to determine in what Way and *Manner*, and how soon here upon Earth, as well as in Heaven, *God's Name is to be hallowed, God's Kingdom to come, and God's Will to be done.* Those that mind our Saviour's Exhortation, will not neglect to endeavour to be in a Readiness for it at all Times. The Word of God abounds with such Passages as may convince an impartial Observer of the various Dispensations of God, that *Goodness will triumph at last over Wick- edness*, and the Kingdom of Darkness be brought to a happy Period, tho' after many Strifes and Revolutions on both Sides.

## 30 MEDITATIONS

But I perceive there is scarce any more Notice taken of such glorious Promises on one, and of the Approach of severe Judgments on the other Hand, than there was in the Days of *Noah* before the Deluge. It is an unaccountable thing, that even those who own the *Bible* to come from God, should less reflect upon what is contained in it about an *universal Reign of Justice, Peace and Joy*; than upon the Tricks of the Devil to turn that Reign into Ridicule by the sottish Notions of some carnal *Millennarians* and false Enthusiasts. We are undoubtedly too presumptuous of our selves, if we suppose there was no need of our Saviour's warning against the fierceness and Delusions of the Devil in the latter times. But the Doctrine of our Saviour is grown so despicable with the far greater part in these Days, that it is thought below a Wit, either to hold, that our Saviour is God, or to believe that there is a Devil.

*But Great God, have Thou in thy infinite Mercy a tender Compassion of thy poor People in this last and most furious Assault*



upon RETIREMENT. 31

*'Assault of the great Adversary of Souls! Hear the Sighs of those that feel his Temptations, and groan under his Tyranny. Those that fear thee prepare more and more for thy glorious Appearance, which thou wilt shortly make, to avenge the Scorn offered by Men to thy only Son. Strengthen the Faith of those thou thinkest fit to bring to the fiery Trial, and do not defer long, mercifully to fulfil thy Decrees about every one of us, for our Redeemer's Sake !*

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UPON RETIREMENT. 31

Abundant of the green abundance of youth,  
Look the sign of things that feel to be  
pleasant, and green under the green  
Look that few that prepare more and  
more for the green abundance, which  
the will shortly make, to answer the  
same offered by them is the only way  
to strengthen the faith of the youth  
of fit to bring to the green field, and do  
not defer long, necessarily to fulfil the  
Duties above every one of us, for our  
Retirement's sake!

# MEDITATIONS

U P O N

*Divers Spiritual SUBJECTS;*

Tending to Promote the

Inward LIFE of FAITH,

A N D T H E

*Practice* of PIETY

Attending it.

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Dr. More Myst. of Godlin.

*A true Member of Christ can no more cease from pleasing and enjoying himself in the Sense and Conscience of his divine Life, and the Results thereof, all holy and becoming Actions; than the natural Man can cease from the Enjoyments of the Body, tho' he knows ere long his Body shall afford him no more Enjoyments.*

*How much the Enjoyments of this present Life are diminished, the more the Christian's Thoughts are cast upon those that are to come.*

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Printed in the Year MDCCXII.

# MEDITATIONS

UPON

Divine Spiritual Subjects

Tending to Promote the

Inward Life of FAITH

AND THE

Practice of PIETY

According to

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THE MORE MYST. OF GODLIN.

A true Member of Christ can no more cease  
from pleasing and enjoying himself in the  
sense and Consistence of his divine Life,  
and the Father thereof, all his and be-  
coming himself; than the natural Man can  
escape from the Enslavement of the Body, as  
he knows a long his Body shall afford him  
no more Enslavement.

How much the Enslavement of this present  
Life is diminished, the more the Christian  
is able to fight and conquer the flesh.

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Printed in the Year 1700.



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# MEDITATIONS

## UPON

### *Divers Spiritual Subjects, &c.*

#### I.

**I**T is a great Condescension of God Almighty to make Use of so weak Instruments, as *Men* in the establishing of his Kingdom. It is no small Joy and Honour to those whom he employeth. But what Love is it in our Saviour, to own, as done to HIM, that Service, whereby we advantage our Brother; nay, which is more, our selves? The *meaner* Instruments God useth, the more appears his Glory through them, and confounds the Haughtiness of the World.

#### II.

## II.

If a Man made a due Reflection both upon the *Deliveries* out of Temptations, and upon being *overcome* by them; then the *first* would fill him with Thanks and Hopes, and the *last* would make him humble and watchful. I believe it is for want of Thankfulness, after we have been delivered out of Trouble, that God withdraws his Hand, and lets us sink again.

## III.

If God's Spirit by his Operation upon our Soul perpetually rejoiced and inlightened us, we might ascribe that happy State and the Effects thereof to our own Being: Whereas by withdrawing sometimes his Countenance, we are made sensible what a sad dark *Nothing* we are, if left to our selves. Nor could we see that incomprehensible Condescension of God's Love to us-ward, if we were not thoroughly convinced of our Undeservedness. Our Duty consists,  
(1.) Care-

(1.) Carefully to avoid giving him Cause to withdraw: *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God*, Eph. IV. 30. (2.) When our Mind is dark and overcast, think it a Distress, and cry to him that can deliver. (3.) Think on Deliveries past, and trust to him that is of no changing Temper.

IV.

If God honoureth me, it is no great matter if all the World besides despise me: And if God despiseth me, it is no great matter if all the World should honour me. It is no small Honour if he owns me to be his Child. This is then most effectually done, when the Glory of his only Son is displayed in me, and my Soul stript of the devilish Dress of Disobedience, and base-loving the World, Darkness, and my self, being instead thereof adorned with *Holiness, Righteousness, and Truth*, which are obtainable in my Beloved.

V.

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### V.

If Use determines the Apprehension of our outward Senses, it is no Wonder the Depravation of our inward Senses, strengthened by Custom, should betray us into so many Errors. What we see in a Looking-Glass seems to be so far behind the Looking-Glass, as it is before it; because our Eye is used to see always in a streight-Line forward: So likewise our Mind judges rather by *Custom* than by *Reality*.

### VI.

A great many fancy they *know* Christ, and nevertheless are so far from *having eternal Life*, that they are neither in the Hopes of, nor in the Way to it. Some call *knowing of a Man*, when they have seen his Body, without considering that the *Soul* is the main part of the Man. Those that have an *experimental Knowledge* of that Light and Truth, which Christ imparts unto the Soul, may be said to *know him*. Herein consists that  
real



real Life, which was designed unto Man, when he was created in God's Image. When *David* reflected upon it, he found that our Life was but a *Death* and a *Pit* without it; and his Soul was struck with Terror and Anguish when he wanted it.

VII.

The true Christian hath Christ always in his Thoughts, as the *SPRING*, *PATTERN*, and *AIM* of all his Actions. The more we live to *our selves*, the more we intangle our selves in Corruption, Disquiet and Misery: The more we *deny our selves*, and endeavour to live to God, the more we enjoy Comfort and Happiness, by pleasing that incomprehensible bountiful Master, who reckons it an Enjoyment of his own Glory, when he makes his Servants Partakers of it: Which is Proof enough that *Selfishness* is a Principle opposite to God's Nature. And should we think much of devoting our whole silly Life, to the glorifying of him, who hath such Propension as well as Power, to glorify those again that seek his Glory only?

VIII.

# 40 MEDITATIONS

## VIII.

Christ's Image in the Soul of Man is not only of exceeding great Comfort to him, that by Heaven's Favour is dignified therewith: But it will even look beautiful to others, more or less, as the Eyes of their Understanding are opened to see it. There are Instances of its having commanded Awe and Respect, even from Infidels, and the very Slaves of Darkness. What noble Effects might not we hope, if a due Care in our Schools and Education was had, and Youth trained up in the ways that tend to the attaining of that Happiness? Of what Esteem and Value would such Merchandises be in the remotest Countries?

## IX.

There is more Wisdom, Goodness and Power of the Creator in the common *Course of Nature*, than in any *Miracle*, whereby he suspends or changes the Course of Nature. The restoring of a dead Man to Life, doth

not seem to me so wonderful, as giving constantly Life by a continual Course of Nature in Generation and Sustentation. It is an unexpressible Condescension of the Creator, when he changeth the Frame of Nature, in order to put such Wretches in mind of him, as will take no Notice of the perpetual and ordinary Instances of his Wisdom, Goodness and Power. If we saw a Grape grow on a Pear-Tree, we should greatly wonder at it. And yet this would not be comparable at all, to the *Seed* it self hid in a Pear, which has in it the whole Nature of the Tree, the Root, Fruit, Branches, and Leaves: All which it is able to produce in time. If this Reflection be applied to the *spiritual Seed* in us, how will it display the Glory of him that works all in all?

## X.

It seems God's Mercy and Glory is the more manifested, when he raises us again after Sin hath flung us. Besides, it is the greater Shame to the Devil, when he is disappointed in the midst

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midst of his seeming Success, and all his Malice and Power baffled. Those that are mercifully snatched out of the Enemies Clutches, must with Thankfulness and Humility the more admire the Deliverer's unexpressible Kindness.

### XI.

The differing *Degrees* of God's Mercy and Grace witness of his Wisdom and Goodness. He that hath least, nevertheless hath more than he deserves. If they were endowed all alike to the highest Degree, such Perfection would seem to belong to our very Being. Whereas it magnifies God's Glory, when the Want of his Favour shews what Man is *without him*.

### XII.

The *Sun* is the Principle of natural Life to the corporal Creation, but influences differing ways, and in differing Degrees of Glory. Animals receive more Benefit from the Sun than Plants: And Man is enabled by the



the Sun to see still more than Beasts. Our *Sun of Righteousness*, that glorious Spring of Truth, Mercy, and Wisdom, produces more glorious Effects in one Soul than in another. The Devil's cunning Malice contrives false Lights, to cheat us of the Glory our Sun of Righteousness hath in Store for us. A lying Spirit endeavours to make true *Inspiration* suspicious and contemptible. All the Devil's Influence into *Enthusiasm*, tends chiefly to obstruct the Progress of the Manifestation of the Great God in our Souls.

## XIII.

Sound Reasoning may convince a Man of the Loveliness of the *New Creature* and of Holiness; but all the Reason in the World cannot produce the *New Man*: Nay, often our corrupted *Self-Will* will work the stronger, the more we argue against it. For as long as we will by Reasoning work our selves into God's Friendship, we undermine the chief *Gospel-Mystery*, viz. God's infinite Love in giving his SON to restore such Wretches to his  
Fa-

## 44 MEDITATIONS

*Favour, by reconciling us to himself by JESUS CHRIST, 2 Cor. V. 18. But we are not yet in him, nor raised with him, much less placed amongst the heavenly Places, whilst we are not perswaded, that all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. Happy are they that have received the Ministry of Reconciliation, and go about it humbly, faithfully, and cheerfully. They will find such Satisfaction in it, that it will serve for an experimental Commentary upon that: My Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me.*

### XIV.

*CHRIST being the Principle of Union betwixt God and our Soul, is likewise the only true Principle of Unity between Men. Those will be always mistaken, that offer to establish a Union, by humane Means and Maxims, upon worldly Grounds, and for worldly Ends.*

## XV.

A carnal Man seeth a beautiful Woman, whereby his unclean Lust is kindled, and thereby disquiet, and perhaps Repentance produced in time. A spiritual Man is raised up to God by the Sight of the Beauty, and admires the Creator in the Creature. This pleasing Admiration is still increased, when he finds a beautiful Soul dwell in that beautiful Body: If not, he endeavours to promote Beauty in the Soul, by Advice and Prayer, and hath on this Occasion the Satisfaction of praising God for that heavenly Frame of his own Soul, whereby he knoweth the due Value of things, and how preferable a regenerate Soul is to a beautiful Body. In one Word: the more our Pleasure flows from a dutiful Regard to God, the more it is pure, real and extensive: And the more it is derived from the Creature, the more it is mixed, imaginary and contracted.

## XVI.

## XVI.

God's holy Mountain or Dwelling, to which his Light and Truth is to convey us, can be nothing else but *Salvation* or perfect Happiness: For where God dwells, there must be Peace and Satisfaction. But a Man can hardly expect to arrive thereunto as long as he will not give the entire Glory of it to God himself. A Saviour, who is not God, cannot work so great a Miracle as to make a Child of God out of a Child of Hell. The Mystery of Iniquity works too visibly, when it promises Salvation to Men, and yet will not allow that God should be the Author thereof. The Devilish Principle of Pride and Selfishness is deservedly punished by Blindness, that such as are led by it, do not see the Truth contained in 1 Tim. IV. 10: *For therefore we both labour, and suffer Reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all Men, specially of those that believe.* And Tit. III. 4: *But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared.* Thus is our Saviour called GOD,



GOD, Tit. II. 10. John XX. 28. without which Supposition we can make nothing of our Saviour's Expression: *He that seeth me, seeth the Father*, John XIV. 9. *Lord, with Thee is the Fountain of Life: Let me see Light in thy Light!*

XVII.

A Garden doth not look so glorious when it has but one sort of Flowers in it, than when it is set out by a great Variety of 'em. We may say the same of God's Garden, which is the *holy City*, the CHURCH. What a presumptuous Reflexion is it upon the great Gardener, when a Rose finds Fault with a Gilliflower, because it is of a differing Kind and Nature? What Beauty or Use a Plant or Flower hath, ought to be imployed to the Master's Glory only, and not to be turned into *Pride* or Self-esteem. Happy are those Plants that are useful more than one Way, and have both *comforting* and *healing* Virtues. But woe unto those Weeds that incumber the Ground, and in a vain Conceit set themselves above the noblest

blest Ornaments of God's Paradise. For this Reason ought every one first to examine himself, whether he makes any real Progress in drawing nigh to God : And then he may consider, how God will imploy him about others also, that so he may be a *Vessel unto Honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's Use, and prepared unto every good Work.*

## XVIII.

In Disputes about Religion, I cannot find the Disputants are so much concerned, who shall get to Heaven soonest; (I hope they all own Christ to be the only Way) but they rather quarrel which of 'em hath the greatest Help, and the best Provision for the Journey; though all this while, in their Life and Conduct, they rather tread the Path that leads to Destruction, than that which leads to Salvation. For generally their ways are more conformable to the Humour of the Prince of this World, than to the Laws and Example of Christ.

## XIX.

It seems Men do believe but little of what Christ saith, or else they would lay it more to Heart: *Let the Dead bury their Dead.* For if People were really convinced they were by Nature *spiritually dead*, they would not so much as fancy they could see any thing in spiritual matters, whilst they continued in that State of Death and Apostacy. And this would be the greatest Inducement to apply to him, who is the only true Physician of Souls. This, for certain, would be infinitely better than to spend our Time in examining the Physician's Nature, as many are apt to do. One thing might convince us of our deplorable State, viz. That *good Resolutions are so often broke*, and that the better the Resolution is, the stronger a Bent we find against it. Which, I say, should convince us of a *Principle of Light*, and of a *Principle of Darknes*, working within. As long as we comply with the Principle of Darknes, we run on in the Path of Death very smoothly: But as soon as we break loose from its

## 50 MEDITATIONS

Tyranny, it leaves nothing untried, to preserve its Claim to us.

### XX.

What a vast Difference is there when we *work our selves*, and when *God works* in us! In our *Prayers* it is most evident. There is no less Difference between *working for our selves*, and *working for God*, who ought to be the *Spring, Help and End* of all our *Actions*. The *Flaws* in good *Actions* are very useful, to humble us, and to exalt God. The more we are humbled, the more is God exalted. The greater my *Failings* are, the more is that *Mercy* to be adored, that will work through so much *Frailty*. If God had not permitted the *Fall of the first Man*, his infinite *LOVE* of raising fall'n Man out of the *Pit*, had not been discovered. We may say the same of a *Soul*, which, by God's *Permission*, sinks deep into *Death*, before she is fetched up again to *Life*.

### XXI.



## XXI.

If a Man learned all the Languages of the World, they would signifie nothing to him, unless he learned also God's Language, thereby to converse with him. Unless God himself opens our inward Ear, we cannot understand the gentle Whispers of his Spirit. Thus our Saviour said to the *Pharisees*, they *had not yet heard his Father's Voice*. And unless he teaches us how to speak to him, we shall never know how to pray to him; since Prayer is the Speech of the Heart. But the worst of all is, that in the State of our Corruption we do not so much as desire to converse with God. Some ridicule the offering at such a Conversation; and some that are reckoned good Men, think it not attainable in this Life. However without this Conversation with God, all our other Conversations are like to be trifling and sinful, and the brightest Talents will prove but as many Sacrifices to Vanity. But that there is such a thing as *Conversation with God*, may be proved by a World of

## 52 MEDITATIONS

Passages of Scripture. But then the  
 said Conversation presupposes a due  
*Qualification*, which we may call the  
 Talent of *knowing God's Language*. He  
 himself must *put a new Song in our*  
*Mouth* to praise him withal after our  
 Deliverance, *Psal. XL. 2, 3*. For be-  
 fore he hath delivered us out of that  
 Corruption, which deadneth all the  
 Faculties of our Soul, how can we  
 speak what is acceptable to him? He  
 himself must direct our Hearts, if it  
 shall desire what he is willing to  
 grant, according to *Psal. X. 17*: Lord,  
*thou hast heard the Desire of the Humble:*  
*Thou wilt prepare THEIR Heart, Thou*  
*wilt cause thine Ear to hear.* And hi-  
 ther ought to be referred, *Psal. CXLIII.*  
*1*: Hear my Prayer, O Lord, give Ear  
 to my Supplications: In thy Faithfulness  
 answer me, and in thy Righteousness.  
 The Sense of which Verse I take to be  
 this: " Lord, hear my Prayer; open  
 " thy Ear to my Supplication which I  
 " make in thy Truth, and grant a  
 " Return to my Petition in that  
 " Righteousness of thine, which,  
 " from the God of their Salvation,  
 " receive those that heartily seek thee,  
 " and

“ and in Purity of Heart are turned  
“ away from Iniquity, Wrong and  
“ Falshood.

XXII.

A Thing that by its Nature sinks downwards, cannot of it self move upwards: Our Corruption draws us downwards, how can we move upwards to God of our selves? God must grant us the very first Motion to be converted. He hath Reasons why he doth not deliver us of our Sickness all at once. People in Health forget often what brought their Distemper on them, and what they suffered by it.

XXIII.

In our *natural* State of Corruption, we would not have any one better than our selves; and so we are apt to believe, that there are none better than we. From the same Principle flows Peoples suspecting others guilty of those Faults, which they are guilty of themselves.

## XXIV.

We despise many a thing, because it doth not agree with our particular Fancy. We cannot look upon its Goodness with an Eye of *universal* Love and Wisdom, because it doth not suit our particular Taste and Judgment. Even bitter things are more pleasant to some Palates than the sweet: And the great Wisdom hath placed more Usefulness in bitter things, than in sweet ones; since they better resist Corruption. It is a common Fault, that we undervalue even the spiritual Gifts of others, if they be but different from ours; though the wise Disposer of all hath his Ends in the bestowing of 'em. At least he knoweth best, in what manner every Servant ought to glorify him. It is *Pride* and *Disobedience*, if we covet the Gifts of others, tho' we are apt to flatter our selves, and fancy it is all out of pure *Love* to God. A faithful Servant leaveth it wholly to his Master, which way he shall be pleased to imploy him. For though he delights to work in his Master's  
Vine-



Vineyard, yet doth he so love his Master, that it is a Satisfaction to him, to see his Master's Business done, whoever hath a Hand in it. His Master's Prosperity he rejoices in, because he hath nothing but what his Master may call *his own*. At this rate have the Children of God a Glimpse of that Happiness the Lord speaks of: *what is mine is thine*. And the contrary will hold too: *What is thine is mine*. But the Craft of Satan beguiles some so far, that under a Pretence of seeking God's Glory, they rob him of what is his, and ascribe to themselves what is entirely due to their Master. What such Men deserve, may be gathered from the Punishment inflicted on *Rebels*, who, attempting to appropriate their Prince's Honour and Prerogative to themselves, incur the severest Penalty, and lose all, instead of gaining more: Whereas faithful Servants, that seek only their Prince's Glory, may enjoy safely the good things which belong to the Prince himself. But we have contracted such a violent Bent of Satan's Nature, that nothing but the Fire of Affliction can cure it.

## XXV.

The Beauty of our Soul consists in her *Resemblance with Christ*. This Resemblance the Soul obtains in the Manifestation of Christ in her, whereby she is transformed into his Image and Likeness. A Soul which hath been exercised by great *Sufferings*, and by holding out under them hath practised much of Christ's *Obedience*, is a dearer Object unto God, than a Soul through which Grace works in a *smoother* way ; though perhaps the latter may do more frequent good Offices to other Souls. *The more Obedience, the more of Christ*. There is no great Obedience in doing the good Works, which God freely enables us to do, and are rather a *Reward* than *Labour* to a Soul that loves God never so little.

## XXVI.

God in his Mercy affords us now and then a little Sight of the glorious Abode of his Saints with him, the Aim of our Pilgrimage : But even  
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in our moving forward, we meet with another Hill to climb over, which intercepts the sweet Sight of our blessed Dwellings of Peace and Joy. It would be madness to give therefore over the Journey, or to go back. True Christian Souls press but the more forward, when they find themselves out of Sight of their beloved Home. And it is a Sign we are drawn by the divine Loadstone, when our longing for, and hastening towards the Center of Happiness doth not decrease but increase.

XXVII.

My Journey from *Joffa* to *Jerusalem*,  
\* may be an Emblem of our Pilgrimage to the heavenly *Jerusalem*. In the Beginning I was overjoyed that I should have so much Assistance and Comfort of my Company. But soon after I was told, the Companion designed for me could not go. For my  
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\* *It was in the Month of Octob. 1699. when the Author travelled in these Parts, and returned to London about the latter End of the Year 1700.*

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Comfort, he recommended me to the *Turkish Aga*, and I enter'd upon my Journey pretty well cheered up: But I was not yet out of the Gates, when I was stopped by the Customer's Servant. After they had let me pass at the *Druggerman's*, contenting them, I was no sooner out of the Gates, but the *Arabs* began to exact upon me, and the *Turks* my Patrons seemed altogether useless to me; though afterwards they helped me at right out of the *Arab's* Hands, and refresh'd me at *St. Jeremy's*, when I was very much tired. My own Carrier, that looked after the *Afs*, vexed me when I came within Ken of *Jerusalem*. My Patrons, the *Turkish Aga's* Guards, frightned and visited me. Being arrived at last at the Gate of *Jerusalem*, and thinking all was over, I was forced to walk to another Gate, where, in fine, after all my Fatigues, I was received by a Messenger sent me from *St. Salvadore*, and there refreshed with Rest and Entertainment.



## XXVIII.

Those that cavil at the Bible ought to consider, whether it be fitter that God should humour us, or that we should acquiesce in the way he thinks fit to take for acquainting us with his Will. Those that have a Reluctancy to obey the first Elements of his Instructions, cannot in Reason pretend he should satisfy them about the more nicer Points of his Doctrine, and of the whole Religion by him established.

## XXIX.

What we ask of God in *Christ's Name*, that is, in a Frame and Temper of Mind like his, will certainly be given unto us; because God delights in his Son's Image: But before we have put on Christ, we cannot be said to *ask in his Name*; because in Scripture-Sense the *Name* and the *Nature* of a thing are the same. And so may be understood the *New Name* and *God's Name*, Rev. II. 17. III. 12.

## XXX.

## XXX.

*Inanimate Creatures* have something of the Creator's infinite Goodness in them, upon several Accounts. They do not only *bear Fruit*, but also when they bear it, do not so much as use their Fruit *for themselves*, but entirely for the Service of other Creatures. Not to mention that their Fruit hath again a *new Seed* in it for its farther Increase and Multiplication. What an unnatural thing is it then in *MAN*, to aim neither at the praising and glorifying his wonderful Maker, nor at the being serviceable to the rest of his Fellow-Creatures, in order to make them also praise the Lord, who alone gives all the Capacity of doing Good? Nay, which is worse, those that live intirely to the Dishonour of their Creator, by making the greatest Idols of themselves, would fain have every one pay Homage to them. They do not care to advantage their Fellow-Creatures any further than as it suits with this selfish and satanical Principle of theirs. Whereas a faithful Subject of the Kingdom of  
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Heaven reckons nothing his *own*, but all his Master's. He delights in no Friends nor Acquaintance, unless they be also his Master's Friends and Acquaintance. In one Word: his Master's Interests are his own; and this enlarges his Happiness; because he rejoiceth even in the Happiness of others, if they do but belong to his Master.

XXXI.

Heavenly Happiness hath this Advantage, that it shares in the Happiness of others. For as it hath God for its Foundation, so it rejoices at all the Joy which God, by his Love, causes any where. A characteristical Sign of that Happiness, is a constant Regard to God, as the only Cause of it: Which if we really do, then we shall neither envy those that have a greater Share, nor despise those that have a lesser. The smallest Share is more than we deserve. Those that have received very little, are nevertheless God's Favourites, and we ought to esteem them upon that Account. So that the true Temper of a hope-

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hopeful Scholar in God's School, consists in *an humble Willingness to learn of those that are greater Proficients*; and in *a grateful Readiness to instruct those that are backward*. Such a faithful Love towards this good Master, which vouchsafes to teach such miserable Wretches once possessing the Scholar's Mind, will inspire it with an holy Desire to see the Master's Name glorified every where, both by the Number and Progress of the Scholars. Divine Wisdom will teach us when we are ripe to instruct others again. It will show us likewise how an hearty Desire of helping others forward ought not to hinder us from learning on still for our selves; and how a Desire of learning on still ought not to restrain us from imparting to others what we have learned.

### XXXII.

*HUMILITY* is the *essential* Character of a Christian, or of one in whom Christ is formed. Though Christ being in God's Form, esteemed it no Usurpation to be like God; nevertheless he humbled himself to  
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the lowest Degree of a Servant, and performed an Act of infinite Love, the essential Quality of God himself. Who therefore comes nearest to his Saviour's *Obedience, Love and Humility*, will also have the greatest Share in his Name, which is above all Names: God loving those most that descend lowest in the Performance of his Will, (which is nothing but *LOVE*) & delighting to impart his Happiness unto those that are most poor in their own Eyes. Upon this Account those will shine brightest, who have been most instrumental in bringing others to Righteousness. For herein consists the true Lustre of a Soul, since all true Righteousness is an Irradiation of the eternal Sun of Righteousness.

XXXIII.

It is a strange thing that Love to the Creature should be stronger than Love to God; and many should be willing to sacrifice their Lives to the Love of the Creature, whilst there are so few that think it worth their while to sacrifice themselves and their  
Life

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Life to the Creator. The Power of Darkness, and the Deceit of the Heart is so great in Men, that they reckon it Madness to do so much for God, as Thousands do for the Creature.

*But Thou, O Fountain, and exceeding great Reward of perfect Love; make me truly thankful for thy great Mercy in making me sensible of this; and strengthen me with thy heavenly Food to overcome all Hindrances, that oppose my constant acting by this thy divine Light.*

### XXXIV.

A faithful Servant is not contented to know *WHAT* Business he hath to do for his Master, but he takes also his Master's Directions *HOW* to do it. If God puts a good Design into our Head, we must apply to him, that he may also direct us *how* we may accomplish it. If with due Humility we consider we have neither *Strength* of our own to do it, nor *Wisdom* to do it well, we shall then cast our selves wholly upon him, and then our Works are done *in him*, and are like to bear everlasting Fruit.

### XXXV.

## XXXV.

I find that generally People run upon Extremes: Either they entirely give themselves over to new Lights, or they entirely reject even what there is in it of God's Finger. *A wise Man keeps a Mien between both. He admires what is of God, and pities what is of Man's own Fancy.*

## XXXVI.

Too much spiritual Light all at once darting down into a Soul that hath liv'd a long while in spiritual Darkness, would be as prejudicial to her, as too much natural Light to one that hath been a long while shut up in a dark Place.

## XXXVII.

It is a Shadow of eternal Happiness, (where every Body is to be fully contented with his Degree of Happiness,) when we see Men here on Earth endowed with *differing* spiritual Gifts, to be best pleased with their own

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own Gift. But it is an Effect of perverse Nature, when we despise or reject those which Heaven's Kindness hath benefitted another way with spiritual Talents.

### XXXVIII.

It is an unspeakable Goodness in God, to reward us for the Good, which he himself enables us to do. The *Inclination, Direction* and *Power* of the Good we do, is his; nay, it is he that doth it through us. The Pleasure of having done it, is a great Reward; and nevertheless the very Good we do sincerely, humbly and purely, is a *Means* by which we get greater Strength, more Wisdom, and better Opportunity to do it.

### XXXIX.

It is a great Mercy of God, to be freed from the *Zeal of a Party*, which so strangely byasses Man's Reason. In such a Calmness we see, how the Fancies of Men, according to their different Tempers, have *disguised* the Truth, by mixing their own filthy Vapours  
with



with the Beams of that divine Light, which guides us into all Truth, or is rather *TRUTH* it self. The greater Proficients we are in Purity of Heart, the more we are enabled to discover the Truth in those very Opinions, which seem to be contrary one to another,

XL.

Our Thoughts have their Spring either from a Principle of *Light*, or from a Principle of *Darkness*. One carrieth them *towards* God, the other leads them away *from* God. The more a Man thinks, when he thinks wrong, the deeper he plunges himself into Error. The more he thinks, when he thinks well, the more he discovers Truth in its charming Loveliness and Prerogative. The Spring of true and right Thoughts is that Law which converts the Soul, and maketh wise the Simple. The Effect of it consists in the Joy of the Heart, and an Illumination of the Eyes, Psal. XIX. 7, 8.

XLI.

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### XLI.

It is a great Pity that most Christians rather study to prove who hath the best System of Divinity, or Church-Government, than thoroughly to know what *CHRISTIANITY* it self is, and that *FAITH* whereby the *Believer hath everlasting Life*, John III. 36. It is still more ridiculous to confine God to our Schemes of Religion. Men generally dote upon their own Schemes, and forget the *Design* for which the Schemes were made.

### XLII.

The Formation of the *New-Birth*, or of the inward Man, is very wonderful! God's Love and *Mercy* is, as it were, the *Womb* wherein \* it is conceived. The *Word of God* which liveth and abideth for ever, (1 Pet. I. 23.) is the *Seed*. The *Spirit of Truth* is as it were, the Warmth, or *natural Heat*, forming the inward  
Man,

Man, and nourishing him by its gentle Influence, into a compleat Measure. But if we cannot comprehend the *natural* Generation, how can poor mortal Wretches presume to define, and make out *spiritual* Regeneration?

## XLIII.

*Amor descendit non ascendit.* Benefactors generally love their Clients better than the Clients their Benefactors. It is the Nature of Love, (if it be not a bastard or counterfeited Love) rather *to give than to receive*. The Sun sends down its Beams to the lowermost Parts of the Earth: our Steams which are thereby raised, reach but a very little way up towards Heaven. The more refined Vapours get up highest, and gathering at last into Clouds, afford fruitful Rains; whereas the thick stinking Fogs infect the Air with unwholesome Qualities.

## XLIV.

Most People busie themselves more about building up the outward Part  
or

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or particular Church, than about advancing that invisible Church, which is the *Spouse* and Body of Christ.

## XLV.

It is a Presumption to demonstrate, nay, to comprehend, how *Three* are *One*, or how *One* is *Three*, both Parties having run themselves into Inconveniencies by offering at it. It stands us in more stead, to come to a blessed Experience of being *One* with GOD in Christ, (and to enjoy the Happiness of that Peace, which passes all Understanding, as the happy Product of that Union;) than to know the nicest Distinctions, Busy-Men have contrived about the Mysteries of Salvation.

## XLVI.

*Righteousness* is an Agreeableness to the Law. When the whole Frame of our Mind is brought to a Conformity of that Law, which is *Light* and *Truth* in the innermost Center of our Soul, so that that Light hath overcome the Darkness or satanical Principle,



principle, (which makes up the old Man, or the Body of Sin) then we have Peace with God, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. We then dwell in God, and God in us.

## XLVII.

If two Persons viewing one another, can kindle mutual Love in one another's Heart; what must the Effect be, when a Soul, by steadily looking upon God, discovereth his kind, and gracious Countenance towards her? *Turn thy Face unto me, and be gracious unto me, for I am desolate and afflicted*, Psal. XXV. 16. First doth the Lord turn his Face to an afflicted Soul, and then commiserateth her Condition.

## XLVIII.

Who would be the greatest amongst you, let him be the Servant of the rest. This is a Sign of God's infinite Love and Favour, when he maketh one serviceable to a great many: For God most delights in that Creature which is most serviceable to others.

## XLIX.

## XLIX.

We have such a Stock of *Falshood* within us, that unhappy Offspring of *Self-love*, that we are not only false to God and Man, but even to our selves. As a false Friend caresses and flatters us whilst we are in Prosperity, but despises and tramples upon us, when we are in Adversity: So will this false Principle, lodged within, puff us up, when we are in Ease, and frighten us almost into Despair, when God withdraws his Comforts. It is a Sign that *TRUTH* gains Ground in our Soul, when spiritual Comforts *humble us more*, and make us wary, not to forfeit them again either by Pride and Ingratitude, or by making the Comfort the Rule and Cause of our Love and Obedience to God. 'Tis likewise a good Sign, when spiritual Distress spurs us on to depend the more upon God, by a firm Belief he designs well for us.

The more Victory we gain over the Principle of *Falshood*, the less will the Falshood of others move us: False Men generally complain most that others are false.

## L.

As *Heaven* is where God dwells, so *Hell* is where Satan rules. The more we delight in the *Works of Darkness*, which are Satan's Pleasure, the deeper we are lodged in Hell. The more we delight in *God's Will*, as the Rule of Righteousness, the higher we rise up into Heaven. Thus are the Children of Light *from above*, and the Children of Darkness *from below*.

## LI.

Princes generally take Delight in raising those highest that least deserve it, that these may the more worship their Benefactors. Thus doth the Spirit of the World ape God in his Ways. For even God is pleased to bestow the greatest Mercies upon the weakest Vessels; his Glory being thereby the more manifested, and those that partake of his Gifts, generally most thankful.

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## LII.

## LII.

*Self-Love* and *Unbelief* are very near a-kin, and the Offspring of the Serpent's Seed. As true Faith in God is the Bond of the Covenant, and produces a Love which maketh us entirely rely upon him, who, according to his infinite Goodness and Wisdom, cannot forsake those that wholly devote themselves to him; so *Love to God* and *Faith* are most nearly related, and born of the same divine Seed of God's Eternal Truth.

## LIII.

As the natural Light sends its Beams all over, where it meets with no Obstacle; so doth the spiritual Light dart its Rays into every Corner of a Heart which is fit to receive it. If it meets with a Soul cleansed and polished, the Light is reflected back *purely*: But the Soul upon which it is reflected, is not the Light it self, but only the Object which receives it. And then this Light reflects from it again in a less or greater Purity, according



according to the Degree of Purity  
which is in the Object.

LIV.

Children use to delight in shewing  
their fine things to their Play-Fellows:  
God's Children ought to take Delight  
in shewing the Tokens of God's Boun-  
ty to others, thereby to encourage  
them to address likewise so bountiful  
a Father, in order to obtain the same  
Graces. However, a Christian's Sa-  
tisfaction is not so much derived  
from the Gifts themselves conferred  
on him, as from the Prospect he hath  
*thereby to promote his Master's Glory.*  
The Joy of a pure Soul doth not  
center upon her own Happiness, but  
upon God's Glory.

LV.

We often want Strength to practise  
what we know, because we have not  
yet thankfully acknowledged the Fa-  
vour of God in giving us this Know-  
ledge. If we did heartily thank God  
for bestowing Knowledge upon us,

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he would soon enable us to act suitably to that Knowledge.

### LVI.

If we desire to be beloved *in God* only, it is not only for God's Glory, if Men love us; (because they find God in us) but it secures also our Peace and Tranquillity in case we be despised: Because we wish that no Body may like us, if he cannot see any thing of God in us.

### LVII.

It is a surprising thing to see how God can work his wise and merciful Ends through our Folly, Weakness, & even the Malice of the Devil himself. Nor would the glorious Wonders of the Works of God appear so astonishing, if so many Obstructions did not first oppose 'em.

### LVIII.

It is a strange thing we should be afraid of *Crosses*, after we are convinced of their Usefulness towards  
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the breaking the Bent of our own Will,  
and the purifying of our Soul from Sin.  
When I was troubled with the Stone,  
I did not scruple to trust my self into  
the Operator's Hands, and to under-  
go the most painful and hazardous  
Cure of *being cut*. \* Why am I then  
afraid of any Suffering, though never  
so bitter, which God may think fit,  
for destroying Death and the Body  
of Sin in me! If I loved God above  
all things, Sin would afflict me above  
all things, and I should leave it intire-  
ly to the most Merciful and Almighty  
Physician, what *Method* and *Means* to  
use about my Cure.

LIX.

A Soul that is truly humble, will  
think herself unworthy of any Com-  
fort. Nay, Impatience, for want of  
Comfort, is a Sign that we must be

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first

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\* *The Author was cut of the Stone at Lon-  
don, about the latter End of the Year 1694,  
and about the Beginning of the Year 1693;  
entered upon his Journey to the Levant.*

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first humbled, to learn *Obedience*, and so to be fitted for Comfort. If we were truly humble, we would think we never made a due Return unto God for Favours already received; and consequently we would be afraid of asking more Favours, before we had sufficiently improved to the Glory of the Giver what we have received already.

### LX.

Some plead for *Imperfection*: saying, *We cannot be perfect*; and make it a Cloak for their *Impenitence*: Others too indiscreetly preach up the Study of *Perfection*, and are thereby insnared into spiritual Pride and Self-Conceit.

### LXI.

In the new Life, where Spirit, Soul and Body are sanctified, God rules all the Faculties of Soul and Body; and where he rules, there is his Kingdom, and there must be *Freedom* and *Happiness* also. On the other Hand, *Reason*, *Will* and *Passions* are under *Confinement* of the hellish Tyrant in

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an unregenerate State. The worst is, that the more they flatter us with Hopes of Liberty, the more dreadfully they deceive us; and after they have once trepanned us, the more cruelly they torment us. There is nothing so true as this: *There is no Peace to the Wicked.*

LXII.

If there was no other Sign of the Perverseness of the Mind of Man, this would be a sufficient one, that about spiritual things almost every one is *satisfied with himself*, and thinks himself as wise and as holy as need is: whereas about temporal things no Body is contented with his State and Condition, but would fain be greater and richer every Day. If we were really wise, we should not be so greedy of temporal things, considering we have as much as Nature requires. What is beyond the Need of Nature, is a Clog to Grace. But in spiritual things, the greatest Share we have, is the least of what an infinite Being is able and willing to give.

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### LXIII.

If a Man that prides himself in rehearsing the Thoughts of others, be compared with one that hath a Stock of good Thoughts of his own Growth; then the former may be likened to a dry Tree hung with green Bows and painted Fruit: Whereas the latter is like a Tree adorned with Plenty of dainty Fruit and Branches produced from its own living Stock.

### LXIV.

People dispute about the *real Presence* in the Sacrament: Whereas he alone hath the best Notion of it, who feeleth the real Presence *within him*, and can experimentally say: I find that Christ's Flesh and Blood is a spiritual Medicine, which hath eased me of a disquiet Conscience, and cured me of loving the World. I feel it as a real Food to my Soul, because it hath strengthened me to deny myself, to bear patiently all the harsh Dispensations of Providence, being now more indifferent than formerly, whether

ther I am rich or poor, found or sick, hated or beloved, despised or honoured. I seek my Neighbour's Good with more Zeal, and am ready to undergo more Trouble upon that Account. I find I have a Spring of living Water, which comforts the Distressed, refreshes those that thirst after Righteousness, and at the same Time strengthens me powerfully to reprove the Wicked, and to confound the Hard-hearted. These are *real* Effects of the Presence of Christ in the Soul; the Sense whereof is beyond all Dispute.

LXV.

There is scarce any *Herésie* but hath some Pretence to *TRUTH*. It is almost impossible that an Opinion should be so utterly false, as to have nothing at all of Truth in it. It is an unaccountable thing how Thoughts spring in our Mind, and beget Variety of Opinions; and it requires a great deal of Experience, and a considerable Degree of divine Light to distinguish between *Thought* and *Thought*.

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### LXVI.

*Thoughts and Ideas* must be something of *Reality*, because they have so great an Effect on our Passions. Thinking on a Person we fancy, that very Thought is enough more to inflame our Love. But it deserves still a more serious Consideration, how a Spirit, let him be good or bad, is able to work in our Thoughts. If the Beams darting out of the Eye of a handsome Woman into our Eyes, produce such an Effect: What must happen in our Soul, if the Eyes of the Mind, fixed upon God, and meeting with the Beams of his gracious Countenance, receive the kind Influence of an infinite Beauty and Bounty?

### LXVII.

When *Elisha* bid the Widow (2 Kings IV.) shut the Door upon her, and to be alone, as she was to have her Oil multiplied; it seems to prove, that the Spirit of God loves to work in a retired Solitude. Whatsoever works upon our Senses, is often but a Hin-



a Hindrance to our hearing the still Voice of God in the innermost Center of the Soul. But besides this, it seems to imply, that the animal Steam of other Bodies interrupt the Operations of the more spiritual Powers.

LXVIII.

'Tis an eminent Degree of God's Grace, if a Man prefers the Will of God before his own Prosperity, and firmly believes that the Will of God is the only good and holy Will. Whilst a Man is not arrived to this Degree of *Grace*, he is not fit to be made Partaker of God's *Glory*. But 'tis God alone, that confers on Men both one and the other.

LXIX:

*CHRIST*, who is *LIFE* it self, descended into Death upon our Account, and for our Benefit: What a Shame is it in us to be backward, in leaving the Body of Death, to enter into his Life, and this for our own Advantage too?

## LXX.

The Beginning of Christianity consists in *knowing that we are no Christians yet*. It is a Sign God favours us with his Light, when we begin to see the great *DESIGN* of our Redemption.

## LXXI.

It is hard to think so of *Grace*, that good Souls ascribe nothing at all to themselves, and the Blame of so many wicked People continuing in Darkness, be not flung upon God. But the more any Person is drawn unto God, the rather he imployes his Thoughts about the Excellency of God's Mercies conferred on him, and about his own Unworthiness to receive them. He wisheth and seeketh to improve 'em to the Giver's Glory; bemoaning rather his Sloth and Ungratefulness, than breaking his Brains about the Reasons of the Damnation of others, or about presumptuously judging of the Ways and *Methods* of God about 'em.

## LXXII.

## LXXII.

It is no small Condescention, that the Great God will stoop so low, as to be a *Man's Friend*; especially when we consider, how the best of Men is in himself but Dust and Ashes; nay, a bare *Nothing*. But still is it worse, when this **NOTHING** fancieth to be **SOMETHING**.

## LXXIII.

If one be lost for want of outward Religion, a far greater Number will perish by laying all their Strefs upon outward Religion.

## LXXIV.

GOD could overcome Satan in one Moment in us: But his infinite Wisdom thinks fit to manage our Salvation in so *gradual* a manner, that it may turn to the greater Shame of the Enemy of God's Glory. God carrieth on his Work in so great a Depth and Secrecy, that neither Satan himself, nor any mortal Eye can see how  
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he begets or *formeth* his Son within us, by impregnating the inmost Center of the Soul with his TRUTH, Love, Righteousness and Holiness. This is an Emanation of his Light, inaccessible to any Creature, but influencing all Creatures with that Life which they enjoy.

### LXXV.

A poor Prisoner, that will break loose from his Prison, makes but his Circumstances the worse by so rash an Attempt. But if he compounds with his Creditor in a submissive way, and is at last discharged by him, he then is safe. Our poor Soul, chained up in a Dungeon of Darkness, doth herself more Hurt than Good by her own busie Contrivances, attempting either to leap out of a Window, or to break open the Prison-Door. But if by groaning for and relying on the Bowels of her Saviour, she moves him to use the *Keys of Hell and of Death* (Rev. I. 18.) in her Favour, she then is safe and at rest.

### LXXVI.



LXXVI.

*CHRIST* being so miserably torn in Pieces amongst the various Sects of Christendom; it is, as if every Sect had kept some Part of him in their Systems of Divinity. These Parts compleatly put together, without the Allay of Man's own Brain, will make up the Draught of the New *Jerusalem*, and the Way leading thereunto.

LXXVII.

As in the new Creature, the Soul is *one* Spirit with Christ; so in the old Man, the Soul is *one* Spirit with the Devil. If it is so hard to separate two Bodies; (as Water and Salt, Wine and Water) How much more difficult must it be to separate Two Spirits that are become *One*? 'Tis a Pity to see how far off the Devil and Hell is thought to be by those that are *one* Spirit with him. Those that begin to feel the sad Effect of that dark Union, are nevertheless too loth to endure the Refiners Fire; and yet without this, the Soul can neither be

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be bruised, nor thoroughly purified from the Dross of Corruption.

### LXXVIII.

*Opinion* about Happiness is not Happiness it self: What Fools then are they, that hug an Opinion instead of Happiness it self? All *Opinions* are to be valued so far as they conduce towards the great Scope of our Being, which is, to glorifie God by his manifesting himself and his divine Attributes in us: Consequently what Opinion soever contributes towards deterring me from Sin, and towards convincing me of the Need of God's Support against Sin: Likewise, whatsoever strengtheneth my Hope, inflames my Love, spurs me on to seek God, enlargeth my Trust in him; this, I say, is a good Opinion.

### LXXIX.

It was an excellent Degree of Humility, when Ephraim forbade his Friends to keep his Things like Relicks by them; For, said he, *I will not have ye think on them, whilst ye may think on God.*

LXXX.

## LXXX.

When I consider what a wretched *Nothing* I am, and what Care infinite *Love* taketh both of my Soul and Body; I am convinced, that *MAN* must be incredibly dear unto God. What an Honour and Happiness must it then be, if God makes use of us, to draw others to this Spring of Life and Happiness also?

## LXXXI.

I'll rather feel and taste the Effect of the heavenly Food, than quarrel with my Brother, which of us hath the best Notion, either of the *Nature* of this Food, or of the Manner *how* it is conveyed into the Soul.

## LXXXII.

The Cunning of the Spirit of Darkness lieth in keeping his Slaves from knowing their own inward State. The Proud doth not believe he is proud; the Covetous doth not believe he is covetous. The crafty Enemy of Souls

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Souls maketh the most miserable Wretches, in the midst of their Misery, fancy *that all is well*. This *Self-Conceit* is one of the strong Holds of Satan, which none but the mighty Weapons of God himself are able to cast down.

LXXXIII.

'Tis an unaccountable Boldness to reason against him who hath given us our Reason; and to undermine his Authority by our Reason, whose Glory it was designed to promote.

LXXXIV.

Many fool away their present time in Projects about a future Happiness; and having miscarried, they remember with Sorrow the Time past.

LXXXV.

'Tis the Speech of the Heart only which is acceptable to God: Bare Words are too outward, and the Strength of the Spirit often loseth by the great Care of fine Language. When



When God is pleased to speak to the Soul, it is not by bare Words, but by a real Power, and a Communication of his Love, Light and Life. Happy are those Souls that are pure and refined enough to understand God's Language.

LXXXVI.

One Word which the heavenly Teacher speaks to the Soul, and thereby enables her to discharge the Duty of a faithful Servant of the King of Kings, is better than a Thousand Commentaries of Men.

LXXXVII.

He that heartily seeketh God, is already found by God. There is no Affliction so great, but God hath a Remedy against it: And there is no Affliction so small, but the stoutest Man may perish in it, if he be left without God.

LXXXVIII.

It is heavenly Wisdom neither to attempt the breaking our Chains of Dark-

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Darkness by our *own* Endeavours; nor by Sloth and Idleness to give the Enemy an Opportunity, to make 'em stronger.

### LXXXIX.

A *spiritual Self-will* maketh us destroy our Body by making of Crosses: A *bodily Self-will* maketh us pamper our Body by fleeing from Crosses. A dutiful Child neither contriveth Crosses, nor shuns 'em,

### XC.

It is the Nature of God, to dart forth the Light of his Love. Where that Light is received in a Soul, there it works reciprocal Love: The Soul living then in and by that Light, is changed from Death unto Life, Light swallowing up Darkness, and Love conquering Hatred and Malice.

### XCI.

The more humbly we acknowledge God's infinite Mercy in bestowing a heavenly Desire upon us, the more pow

powerfully will God draw us after him by an Encrease of this Desire. Our Desire after God is a Sign, that God hath begun to plant his Love in us. The more we bewail our *Unworthiness*, the better God likes of us. And in order to convince us of this *Unworthiness*, he sometimes withdraws from us, that we may feel, what we are *without his Support*.

XCII.

No Desire is allowable in a Child of God, but a Desire *after Holiness*: For this is the Will of God, even our *Sanctification*. He therefore that desires Holiness, desires the Will of God should be done; which undoubtedly is the noblest of our Desires and Wishes.

XCIII.

It seems the Creature hath either a Curse or a Blessing in it, according as it is enjoyed, either *in God* or *without God*. If our inward Eye was but fixed on God, whilst we enjoy the Creature in the outward Man, our Soul

Soul would then be fed by that Love, Wisdom and Power, which hath so wonderfully contrived the Creature for the Service of our Body, and endowed it with so many nourishing and delighting Qualities. But if we enjoy the Creature *without God*, and for no other End than to please our Senses only, or at the best, to support the Body, and this on our own Account too; then the Creature usually revengeth our Forgetfulness of the Creator, by breeding these destructive Humours, the excessive Use of the Creature is usually attended with. It hindreth us at the same time from making an effectual Progress in that Life, whereby the Soul is made subservient to God, and the Body unto the Soul.

## XCIV.

In the Article of *Predestination*, 'tis far more agreeable to the infinite Goodness of God, to say, that Man will not lay hold on the Tender of Grace, than that God will not give it.



## XCV.

'Tis a wonderful Goodness in God, that he commands us nothing but what is for our Good and his Glory. Men are willing to obey their Masters Command, and often hazard Life and Limb on their Behalf; tho' they should be all this while uncertain of any Gain or Reward, and which, when it comes at last, belongs at the best but to this Life: whereas no less than **GOD HIMSELF** is the eternal Reward of his Servants.

## XCVI.

A joyful Sorrow is better than a sorrowful Joy. The latter will end in everlasting Sorrow; but the former in everlasting Joy.

## XCVII.

Though my Misery and wretched Unfaithfulness to God maketh me sorrowful; yet doth God's inexpressible Love to, and Compassion of my Misery, give me Comfort. For in the midst

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midst of my Misery he supports me with Hopes, that he will root out in Time all matter of Sorrow, and perfect his Virtue in my Weakness.

XCVIII.

The Children of this World seek their Fortune and Happiness in the Favour of temporal Princes, though these forget often even those that venture Life and All for gaining their Favour. What a Shame is it then for a Christian to be so slothful, as not to venture half so far for deserving the Favour of an Almighty and most Merciful Being?

XCIX.

The more we strive to do the Will of God, the more our Soul is strengthened to do it in an higher Degree. The gracious Influence of his Light and Spirit increases and gathers Strength by the good Use we make of what we have received. At this rate is God both the *Food* and the *Reward* of those that do his Will.

## XCIX.

When one Man looks upon another, he makes the other look upon him again: So when God looks towards us, he designs to turn us towards him. And again: the more we set our Face towards him, the more will his Beauty and Brightness inflame and attract our Love.

## C.

The more we love God, the more he makes himself known unto us. And again: the more we know him, the more we shall love him. We know him then best, when we feel his Power, and thereby subdue all that is opposite to his Communion with us.

## CI.

God giveth his Servants a Character far above the greatest Character the greatest Monarch upon Earth can bestow on his Servants. God writeth his own Name upon his Servants, whereby they are distinguished from  
E others,

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others, and inabled at the same time faithfully to discharge the Trust committed to their Hands. His Light, with its various Virtues and Emanations, are their Robes; and he feedeth them with himself, and is himself, with the Kingdom of Heaven, their Shield and exceeding great Reward. Happy is the Servant of so gracious a Master!

## CII.

No Body is saved by his *Sect*; but a great many are damned in the best of Sects, because they relied upon their *Sect*. The *Sect* is busie about the *Form and Modes of the Means of Grace*: But Christianity, about the *practical Improvement of the Means*, & consists in a real Operation of *GRACE* or in the Work of God in the Soul of Man. In the best of Churches there are more Subjects to *Antichrist* than to *Christ*: And Christ hath some few Subjects left in the worst Churches.



CIII.

The *Energy of Delusion*, mentioned 2 *Theff.* II. 11. works both in *Mind* and *Body*. In the *Body*, it works by the *carnal Appetite*: In the *Mind*, it works by *Self-Conceit*. Both spring up from *Self-love*, that self-seeking and to it self all-ascribing Principle.

CIV.

In *Time of Comfort*, Christians are too apt to forget their *Weakness*, their *Unworthiness*, and the *State of their Pilgrimage*. In *time of Trouble*, they too soon forget *God's former Mercies*, his *Will and Power to deliver*, and their own *Obligation to suffer*, out of *Thankfulness for former Favours*.

CV.

'Tis no Wonder there is so much *Mischief* in the *World*; since there is so little of the *Love of God*, which is the only *Spring of true Peace and Happiness*. As long as our *Mind* is

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bent downwards, to gratifie the Lusts of the Flesh, it must needs leave God, the Fountain of Life, and consequently *destroy* it self. And therefore this State is truly called \* *Corruption*.

### CVI.

True Fear of God consists in a steady fixing the Eye of the Mind upon the infinite Love of God, whereby he hath so happily and wonderfully wrought our Creation and Redemption: and then in an hearty Endeavour to *answer the END* intended both by our Creation and Redemption.

### CVII.

A Christian's Behaviour, both under *Crosses* and *Comforts*, consists in patiently bearing the one, and in thinking himself unworthy of the other. A Christian never thinks he can shake off the one and deserve the other; but wisheth that both *Crosses* and *Comforts* may work together for carrying on and establishing the *main End*

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\* *φθoγα, Gal. VI. 8.*

End of Religion in his Soul, that is, that *Self-will* and *Self-love* may be overcome, and his Trust in, and Love to God be more and more increased.

CVIII.

A wise Christian will think on Rain when the Sun shineth; and remember Sunshine, when dark rainy Clouds gather over him.

CIX.

'Tis a happy Sign of our Growth in the Love of God, *when his Mercies bestowed upon others, rejoice us as much as if we had received them our selves.* 'Tis a Sign we have obtained Peace with God, and that his Interest is become our own. True *Humility* makes us think the smallest Favour to be more than we deserve: And therefore we can never envy others if they have received more; nor repine at our Condition, if we have received less. True Humility fits us for all other Gifts and Graces. The greatest of these is Love and Charity, which is the *fulfilling of the Law; the more excellent*  
E 3 way,

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way, and the Bond of Perfection, comprehending in it self all other Commandments. O Lord, teach me the great Lesson of true Humility, that I may never be puffed up by any of thy Gifts, nor envy my Brother, if Thou bestowest more upon him than upon my self. Destroy in me that hellish Principle of Self-Love, which defileth the best of thy Gifts, and give me true Humility, which exalteth the meanest of thy Servants.

GX.

'Tis a sad Effect of Self-Love, that of the Good which God works in us, we ascribe too much to our selves; and of the Evil we do our selves, we own as little as possibly we can; nay, are too apt to cloak and to excuse it.

CXI.

A Prophet foretelling Futurities, and proving his Mission by Miracles, hath no contemptible Gift conferred upon him: But still is he far less in the Eye of God, than he who by sincere Resignation offers up himself entirely.



tirely to God, and out of pure Love to his great Master, cheerfully suffers whatsoever he thinks fit to lay upon him. It is not the Man that works the Miracle, but the Power of God: And it doth not depend from the Spirit of Man to know future things, but from the Manifestation of another Principle, *freely* influencing a Man's Understanding. Whereas the Duty of a cheerful *Resignation* cannot be attained to without the *Concurrence of Man's WILL*, and consequently cannot be without an hearty Reformation of all the Faculties of the Mind. And this Change of Nature must needs bear a nearer Resemblance to the Image of God, than the Gift of *Miracles* and *Prophecy*. Nor is any Prophet sure of his own Salvation, but by the Principle of *Faith* only, whereby he serves his great Master with true Faithfulness, Love and Humility.

CXII.

The Sun of Righteousness opens the two Eyes of our Soul, and makes us see with one the incredible Depth

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of our Darknes and *Misery* ; and with the other, the infinite *LOVE* and *POWER* of God compassionating and relieving our Misery. The more we are convinced of God's Mercy, the more we are ashamed of Sin: And the more we are convinced of our Sin, the more we value that Mercy which looks after us. The Beams of that Sun of Righteousness denounce Wrath to Corruption, and are Arrows of Death to the old Man: But they speak Life and Comfort to the new Man, which is begotten of God through the Word of Truth.

### CXIII.

Without *HUMILITY* we cannot be exalted: But we shall never be truly humbled, except God humbleth us himself. *Crosses* and *Temptations* are Means God often maketh use of for humbling us. That we may attain to an humble Sense of our own Weakness, he *suffers us to be OVERCOME, before he enables us to OVERCOME.* Nevertheless he is with us even in that Sorrow, which maketh us grieve for being overcome.

### CXIV.

CXIV.

Some Souls greatly hinder their Progress in the way of Life by *not taking Notice enough of what God works in them*, in order to convince 'em of his Love. For the more we are convinced of God's *Love*, the more we shall trust in him, and the more willing we shall be both to *act* and to *suffer* for him. Our Misery lieth in loving that which cannot make us happy; there being no true Happiness but in him who is *ALL-sufficient*.

CXV.

It seems a *Paradox*, that the Faithful should earnestly desire to be unclothed, and yet be more willing to suffer the Troubles of this Life as long as God pleaseth. Whilst the Lord bestoweth from Day to Day a more lively Sense upon a Soul of her glorious Inheritance, it maketh her desirous to enjoy it: Yet her Love and Obedience growing stronger too, it maketh her willing to stay for it.

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## CXVI.

A true Christian both rejoiceth and grieveth upon God's Account: But when the natural Man either rejoiceth or grieveth, it is always the Effect of *Self-Love*.

## CXVII.

Sin is its own Punishment, as Righteousness is its own Reward. Sin punisheth it self, because it is opposite to Holiness, which is the Nature of him who is the Fountain of all Happiness: But Righteousness rewardeth it self, because thereby a Man giveth himself entirely up to him, who is the inexhaustible and communicative Spring of Life and Happiness.

## CXVIII.

When we are bid to *consider in the Day of Adversity*, Eccles. VII. 14. it may intimate two things, viz. that we should consider the *Cause* whereby God's Judgments are provoked; and then



then the *Design* for which they are sent upon us, which is, to humble and to purifie our Souls.

CXIX.

When the Apostle speaks of the *old Man*, it seems he doth not reckon the *Body* to be the *Man*; but the *Soul*, when it is acted and moved by the Principle of Corruption, which delights in the things that perish. As on the other Hand, it is the *new Man*, when the Soul acts and moves by that divine Spirit which giveth new Life, and nourishes it up in the Soul after it is once given.

CXX.

**FAITH** is the Life of the inner Man. The Embrio or *Beginning* of the spiritual Life consists in believing, that God will forgive my Sins for Christ's Sake, and strengthen me to follow him. The *Progress* or Youth of the spiritual Life is, when I find my Desires after Christ grow more strong and fervent, the inward Hunger being satiated by the Bread of Life,

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Life, or that Light which is the Seed of the new Creature. The *Maturity* or compleater Age of Faith is known by its Power and Energy, *viz.* When CHRIST by Faith overcomes Hell and Death within us, and filleth the Soul unto the Fulness of God.

### CXXI.

The *Glorying in the Cross*, mentioned *Gal. VI. 14.* denotes first that lively Joy a pious Soul reapeth from a due Consideration of that great Love which brought Christ to the Cross. *Secondly*, Doth it consist in a Sense of that *Peace* which was made and purchased by his Death ; and *Lastly*, it implieth that *Power of Life*, which, from the Cross of Christ, is derived upon us for the subduing the Corruptions of Nature.

### CXXII.

The more glorious Ideas God bestows upon us of the Nobleness and Dignity of a Child of God, in the Fellowship of his Son, the more we see our own Vileness, and feel the Wiles

Wiles and Power of the Enemy, who envieth us our Happiness. But the Joy resulting from this glorious State is not to be attained without a previous Sorrow for our Corruption, and a Grief for our Unfaithfulness which so closely adhereth to us.

CXXIII.

People would fain go to Heaven, but are unwilling to go to it *THROUGH CHRIST*. Those that will go *through Christ* to Heaven and Happiness, must learn all the hard Lessons he hath enjoined us. They must *believe* in a Christ slain and crucified by the Princes of this World; they must *take up his Yoke*; they must learn of him to be *meek and lowly in Heart*; they must practise the Duties of *Mortification and Self-Denial*, so highly recommended by him; they must bear the *Contempt* of the World; they must love *Christ's Cross*, and follow the Footsteps he hath left 'em for a Pattern. Alas! this is enough to make *CHRIST* an unwelcome Guest to the nicer sort of our modish Christians: And yet there is no other way to God but *through Christ*. CXXIV.

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## CXXIV.

The *Mind*, *Body* and *Estate* of fall'n Men, is subject to the Spirit of Apostacy in *Self-Love*. This *Self-Love* exerts it self through temporal *Estates*, in Covetousness; through the *Body*, in Lust or sensual Pleasure; through the *Mind*, in Pride and Ambition, both worldly and spiritual.

## CXXV.

Few know what true Christianity is, viz. a *Triumph of CHRIST* over the *Spirit of Apostacy*, which keepeth the Soul Prisoner by *Self-Love* and *Self-Will*. *Self-Love* and *Self-Will* consists in seeking our own Ease, carnal Pleasure, and the Honour of Men rather than the Honour of him, who designed our Happiness in the Enjoyment of his Love and Glory alone.

## CXXVI.

The natural Man placeth his Misery in the Troubles of the outward Man: A Christian reckoneth his Misery



*upon divers Subjects. III*

fery to lie in that *unfaithful Temper* of Mind, which maketh him do the Lord's Work too slothfully, and seek his own too eagerly. A truly faithful Soul rejoiceth rather in *Faithfulness* it self, than in the Reward attending it.

### CXXVII.

*The Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from Iniquity, 2 Tim. II. 19.* Herein the Apostle lays down the Terms of the Covenant of Grace betwixt God and the Soul. On God's Side it is thus expressed: *The Lord knoweth them that are his*, that is, he carefully looks after them, he protects and maintains 'em, he healeth and feedeth 'em, he loveth and leadeth 'em; the Knowledge God hath of Men being altogether an *affectionate and paternal* Knowledge. But then ought we to answer the Kindness of the Lord by a suitable Return of Love and Obedience, thus express'd: *Let every one depart from Iniquity.*

### CXXVIII.

## CXXVIII.

The *Unfaithfulness* of a Servant towards his Master consists, (1.) In *neglecting* his Master. (2.) In being *ashamed* of him, and of his mean Carriage. (3.) In *appropriating* his Master's Goods to himself, and using them as if they were his *own*. The same will hold, if we consider the Relation Men bear to God, their great Lord and Master. How often do we neglect our Master's Interest, and are intirely intent upon our own? Nay, are *ashamed* to own him for our Master, who yet hath so highly deserved of us, and is both able and willing to entrust us with eternal and heavenly Treasures, after we have answered the Character of a good Servant here?

## CXXIX.

*Four* things are required for gaining the Victory in a spiritual Combat: (1.) An entire *Distrust* of our own Strength. (2.) An entire *Reliance* upon the Power of Christ, whose Strength is then made

made most manifest, when we most distrust our selves. (3.) A good Use of the Faculties of our *Soul*, and watchful Restraint of the *Senses* of the Body. (4.) A patient Constancy in Prayer and Supplication.

CXXX.

If a Man did duly ponder his own *Nothingness*, he would every one and even the greatest Man in the World think as great a *NOTHING* as himself. It would then be all one to him, whether the World did praise or despise, extol or vilifie him. For what can a *Nothing* add to my Happiness, or detract from it, if God liveth it?

CXXXI.

The *carnal Will* of the old Man moves continually towards its own Centre, the *EARTH*, from whence the Flesh hath taken its Rise. The *spiritual Will* of the new Man moveth continually towards its own Center, which is *GOD*, who by his *WORD* hath created the new Man, and inspired

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spired him with a divine Will. The Collision of these *Two* opposite Wills moving contrary ways, one *upwards*, and the other *downwards*, causeth that fierce *Combat betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit*, of which the Scripture speaks at large, and which daily disquiets the spiritual Pilgrim in his way to Rest and Happiness.

### CXXXII.

The Soul is then acted by a divine Principle, when she sinks into a lower Degree of *Humility* by the Enjoyment of *Comforts*; and riseth into a higher Degree of *Love* and spiritual Courage by *Crosses* and Temptations.

### CXXXIII.

Our Peace with God is the Foundation both of the Peace with our selves, and of the Peace with our Fellow-Creatures also. If that Foundation be wanting, we cannot expect any long Peace either with our selves or with others. For *Self-will* and *Self-Interest* will put all into Disorder again.

### CXXXIV.



## CXXXIV.

The *World*, the *Earth*, and the whole *visible Creation*, if they be surveyed by a Soul destitute of God's Light and Guidance, will now, after the Fall, tempt her into a liking of them, and stir up in her abundance of selfish Lusts and Desires. The Soul thus taken by the Bait, hid in the Creature, will thereby be farther and farther drawn away from the Creator, and pleased with the transient Beauty she findeth in the Creature. This is the way to endless Torment and Misery. For the more eagerly the Soul pursueth her Happiness in the Creature, the more it fleeth from her, and she will be left empty and indigent in the midst of all her Pursuits. On the other Hand, when the Soul comes to be impregnated with the Seed of that *WORD* which liveth and abideth for ever, then there will spring up in her an *heavenly Desire* and *Impulse*; which, being wrought by the Spirit of God Himself, will draw the Soul upwards, and by little & little disentangle her from the various Incumbrances

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branches of the World, and Propensity on towards the Creature. As this *Desire* gathereth Strength, it regulateth the whole Man, and sanctifieth *Spirit, Soul* and *Body*, making each of 'em to act in a Principle conformable to its own Nature. Such Works are done in God. And 'tis then that a Man can enjoy the Creature in true *Christian Freedom*, which he could not do before. And this is one of the noblest Prerogatives of God's Children, and an inestimable Jewel to those that have attained to it.

### CXXXV.

*It is more blessed to give than to receive.* 'Tis the Nature of true Love to diffuse and to communicate it self, even as God communicates himself who is *LOVE*. The nearer a Soul is transformed into the divine Love, the more she rejoiceth to communicate herself, and she is more pleased with giving to, than with receiving from others. Her Joy increaseth, as her Gifts increase she bestoweth on others. If a Man did love God with a pure Love, he would be more pleased

ed with giving himself entirely up to God, than with receiving Gifts from him. Though indeed he cannot give himself up to God, except he hath first received from God the Ability to do it. But even this Willingness to make himself an entire Sacrifice to God, is acceptable to him, and an inducement of conferring more Gifts upon so grateful a Soul.

CXXXVI.

What the Lord says, *Hagg. II. 6, 7.* *will shake the Heavens, and the Earth, and the Sea, and the dry Land: And will shake all Nations, and the Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory.* These Words, say, as they relate to the Operations preceding our Lord's coming in humane Nature; so they may no less be applied to the spiritual Dispensation, or the coming of Christ in the Spirit, which will be preceded by most dreadful and terrible Judgments. The same Truth is experimentally felt by every Soul in particular in the Work of Conversion, before Christ is manifested in her. What great Com-

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Commotions, Doubts and Perplexities must a Soul pass through before *CHRIST*, the Hope of Glory, be revealed in her, and the Mind after so violent a Storm, settled on a sure and unshaken Foundation?

## CXXXVII.

A great many read the *Bible* with a Design to be more *learned*: But few read it with a Design to be more *pious*, more *humble*, more *heavenly minded*.

## CXXXVIII.

Many pretend they love God, and yet have so very little of his Company; nay, love that Company best where the best Friend is shut out and neglected.

## CXXXIX.

God exerciseth his Children by many Temptations, that they may have a constant Sense of their own *Weakness*, which would sink 'em; and of the *merciful Power of God*, which doth relieve 'em.



CXL.

'Tis an excellent Prayer recorded  
*1 Theff. V. 23: I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST:* But then the original Text may be also rendered in this Manner: *That your Spirit, Soul and Body be preserved blameless in the Presence of Christ!* That is, that *CHRIST*, after he is once formed within you, (*Gal. IV. 19.*) may preside over all the Faculties of Spirit, Soul and Body, and by his constant and immediate Presence direct and influence all the Actions resulting from it. At this rate is the Preservation of the new Creature entirely to be ascribed to Jesus Christ, who is the Beginner thereof.

CLXI.

John XVIII. 37: *For this Cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness unto the Truth.* TRUTH is the Restauration of God's Image: And therefore that Text may be thus  
 pa-

paraphrased: "I am come into the  
 " World, to recover for, and to re-  
 " store to you the Image of God, for-  
 " feited by the first Transgression  
 " and in order to this, to destroy  
 " that devilish Image, stamped upon  
 " you by him who did not abide in  
 " TRUTH, John VIII. 44.

## CXLII.

What the Prophet, *Hosea* II. 15. says  
 of the *Valley of Achor*, which the  
 Lord will give for a *Door of hope* to  
 the Church, may be applied to the  
 whole Church in general, and then to  
 every Soul in particular. *Achor* sig-  
 nifieth *Trouble* or *Perturbation*, thro  
 which the drooping Soul, affected  
 with a Sense of her Corruptions  
 must pass, in order to attain the  
*Door of hope*. Thus it will be with  
 the whole Church of Christ, whose  
 Glory and Brightness will not be dis-  
 played but after a great many Trou-  
 bles and Judgments.

CXLIII.

The Spring of Christianity, and of all heavenly Operations, is to be in the HEART.

Mat. VI. 21. Where your Treasure is, there will your Heart be also.

Jam. IV. 8. Draw nigh to God, — purifie your Hearts ye double-minded.

Psal. LI. 10. Lord, create in me a clean Heart.

Pf. LXXXVI. 11. Teach me thy Way: Unite my Heart unto the Fear of thy Name.

1 Pet. III. 15. Sanctifie the Lord God in your Hearts.

Phil. IV. 7. The Pence of God shall keep your Hearts.

Prov. IV. 23. Keep thy Heart with all Diligence; for out of it are the Issues of Life.

Psal. CXIX. 11. Thy Word have I hid in mine Heart, that I might not sin against Thee.

2 Pet. I. 19. Ye do well, that ye take heed unto the Word, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark Place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-Star arise in your Hearts.

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Since from the *Heart* or Centre of the Soul spring up Thoughts, Words and Deeds, by which God is either honoured or dishonoured; the great Work of our Salvation depends upon the Purification of the Heart: Which is more or less impure, as it is more or less *divided* between GOD and SELF: (the Love of the World, and of the Creature centring in Self.) *Self*, or the Satanical Nature, hinders us from drawing so nigh to God, as to feel more and more his drawing nigh unto us in so powerful a way, as to have our Peace more and more established on a sure Foundation, by sanctifying God in our Hearts, or by giving our selves entirely up to his holy Spirit.

### CXLIV.

The *END* of Christianity and of the whole Work of Redemption is, That GOD may be glorified again in the Creature; of which we have divers Expressions in Scripture.

Rom. VI. 22. Being freed from Sin, and become Servants of God, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the End eternal Life.

Rom.



Rom. XIV. 9. To this End Christ both died, & rose, & revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living.

2 Cor. V. 15. He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto HIM which died for them, and rose again.

Gal. I. 4. He gave himself for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil World.

Tit. II. 14. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.

1 Pet. II. 24. He bare our Sins in his Body on the Tree, that we being dead to Sin, should live unto Righteousness, by whose Stripes we were healed.

Heb. XIII. 12. That he might sanctifie the People with his own Blood, he suffered without the Gate.

1 Tim. I. 5. The End of the Commandment is Love out of a pure Heart.

The Design and ultimate END of God's infinite Love in our Creation and Redemption, is his Glory in our Happiness. A pure and holy Heart is required for that intimate Union, by which, through Christ, God lives

## 124 MEDITATIONS, &c.

in us, and we in him, unto all Eternity. Since this present Life, allowed for our Purification, is but uncertain, we ought carefully to refrain from what may ensnare us into the Love of the Creature; and, by turning our Hearts to God, pray to him for his Almighty Support and Deliverance. Christ's Promise *to be with his Church to the End of the World*, gives us this comfortable Hope, that he will faithfully assist us, till we be set free from all the Snares and Temptations of this World, and triumph at last over all the combined Powers of Darkness, *according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

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CON-

CONSIDERATIONS  
ON THE  
INTEREST  
OF THE  
CHURCH UNIVERSAL,

And on the  
MEANS whereby to promote it.

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Smith Select Discours. p. 405.

*The Soul never more slideth and degenerates from it self, than when it becomes enthrall'd to some particular Interest: As on the other Side, it never acts more freely or fully, than when it extends it self upon the most UNIVERSAL End.*

Comen. in Annot. ad Rat. Ord. F. F. Bohem.  
*Charitatis vera character est, non sibi tantum bene esse velle ac optare, sed OMNIBUS. Atque si non actu ipso curam & sollicitudinem pro omnibus Ecclesiis gerere, (id quod Apostolorum fuit) at saltem orare pro omnibus sanctis.*

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The Second Edition.

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Printed in the Year MDCCXII.





# CONSIDERATIONS ON THE INTEREST OF THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL.

**T**HE Interest of the Church Universal lieth doubtless in the raising, enlarging and adorning of that mystical Building, which is called the City of God, Christ's Spouse, and Christ's Body. As this Body is made up of such Members, as are animated by the vital Spirit which floweth from the Head, and linketh them together with one another as well as with their Head, **CHRIST**; so Real Christianity is, without doubt,

the main Point to be considered about the Edification of the Church Universal: And as real Christianity spreads and improves, or shrinks and decays; so the *Universal Church* must be looked upon either as flourishing or declining also. Real Christianity consisting in following the Steps of our Saviour, and expressing by our Life this Pattern, as far as Divine Grace enables every one of us; we may term true Christianity a *Resemblance to Christ*, the Restorer of God's Image in the Soul of Man, and the Beginner and Fulfiller of our Faith. Now the nearer we resemble unto Christ, and the more there is of those that resemble him, the more fully the glorious *END* of his Gospel is answered, and the *Church Universal* advanced and promoted.

## II.

Though it be one of the greatest Absurdities to think, that Christ died for this or that Sect barely, and that Heaven must be stocked only out of one particular Church; yet do the Notions of Christianity run so low  
now.

now-a-days, that the greatest Part fancy, Christian Religion to be nothing else but the performing of divine Worship after this or that Form, and holding such or such Opinions.

III.

This false Supposition hath betrayed many into very unchristian Courses against those that differ from them in Form and Party, and hath occasioned, and still doth occasion, most deplorable Effects. Wherefore divers pious Souls have endeavoured to heal the Wounds of the Church, by reconciling the aforesaid Differences. It is but too well known how fruitless hitherto such Endeavours have proved. Nor can it be otherwise, as long as that poysonous Root of all Dissention tyrannizeth over the Soul, viz. the rebellious Principle of *SELF-LOVE*, contracted by the Fall of the first Man, when he listened to the Serpent, and so declined from God to Satan, the Prince of Pride. It would not signifie much neither, if all the Men in the World resolved upon using the same external Form

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and Expression, and the same Church-Service, continuing all the while Slaves to the Kingdom of Darknes. Whereas Holiness, or real Christianity, sincerely pursued, in the several particular Churches, would bring People over to that sweet and heavenly Temper, to which Jarring and Disquiet is a perfect Stranger,

## IV.

Wherefore I am of Opinion, that it would be far better, if the differing Parties, instead of compiling *Confessions* to be received by all Churches, and instead of arguing against one another's Tenets, would vye with one another, who could produce most Instances of such Souls, as in their several Churches, have attained to the glorious *Renovation of God's Image in the Heart*, which is the Sign and Effect of that *FAITH*, which (a) *overcomes the World*, (b) and by which *Christ dwelleth in us*, inabling those that receive him, (c) *to become Children of God*.

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(a) 1 John V. 4. (b) Eph. III, 17.  
(c) John I. 12.



God. Those that (d) are thus in Christ become new Creatures, and united with him, who is the Head of the Church, (e) need not busie themselves about a *Confession*, whereby they might be united and kept together; all of them being heartily united already, and living, as it were, by one common Soul, as the Christians did of old. (f)

V.

Though the Number of such as are united on this Foundation, is but very small, yet hath God some here and there, which in his infinite Mercy he hath left for a *Salt of the Earth*. These few ought to be the more thankful to that Goodness, which hath so mercifully snatch'd them out of the Inundation of that Corruption, which now every where overflows the Christian World. The greatest Thankfulness to the great Donor of all good and perfect Gifts consists in endeavouring to benefit others also by what we have received.

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(d) 2 Cor. V. 17. (e) Eph. V. 23.  
f) Acts IV. 32.

eived out of the inexhaustible divine Treasure, to the Glory of so liberal a Giver. Wherefore the aforesaid *Proficients* in real Christianity can hardly make any better Return to Heaven's Favours, whilst they are here on Earth, than by heartily bestirring themselves to communicate unto others also that divine Nature, whereof they themselves have been made Partakers.

## VI.

After these Premises I infer, that the *Interest of the Church Universal* might be happily promoted, if the following Points were but more practised among Christians :

(1.) Those that are in Authority should study all possible Means to provide such *GUIDES* for the People, as had themselves an experimental Knowledge of the abovementioned real Christianity, and could say with St. Paul : *Be ye Followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* (g) At least, utmost Care ought to be taken, that a Preacher may

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(g) 1 Cor. XI. 1.

may not bring a Reproach or Disparagement upon his good Doctrine by his bad Example. Persons that have not themselves recovered Life by Christ, will hardly be able duly to explain and to lay before their Hearers, what is the (b) *Old Man depraved according to the Desires of the Deceit*, and the (i) *new Man, who is created after God in Righteousness and Holiness of the Truth*: what it is to be dead in Sin and Trespases, and to be raised with Christ from the Dead. Wherein nevertheless consists true Repentance and Faith, which two Heads (k) St. Paul lays down as the main Ingredients of an unfeigned Conversion to God, and of the Salvation of Souls attending it.

## VII.

Without this Foundation the learnedst and most florid Discourses will avail little or nothing towards the enlarging of God's Kingdom upon Earth. They may tickle the Ear for a while, get Credit and Esteem to the

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(b) Eph. IV. 22. (i) Eph. IV. 24. (k) Acts XX. 21.

the Preacher, and fill the Minds of the Hearers with a Set of fine Notions at best. Nay, though they should convince the Auditory of the Advantages of a good moral Life; yet will little be done in reality, whilst the Principle of *Disobedience*, of *Self-love*, and *Self-will* continueth the unhappy Spring of the Heart. At the best, a good moral Life is far enough as yet from being *God's Righteousness*, (l) which however is the *Scope* of the holy Gospel of Christ. Moral Men are sometimes fallen into a vain *Conceit of themselves*, and have set up their own Righteousness, for want of due Instruction about the *deplorable State of corrupt Nature*, and the great Necessity and glorious Advantage of that *new Birth*, which is from above, and formeth Christ in us, (m) consequently begets God's Righteousness, which is by Faith in Christ. (n)

## VIII.

(2.) For the breeding of many Guides duly qualified, it would be requisite to

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(l) 2 Cor. V. 21. (m) Gal. IV. 19.  
(n) Phil. III. 9.



to order the *SCHOOLS* so, that a solid Foundation for true Wisdom might be laid there, by inuring Youth sometimes to a sincere Regard to him; who is the Fountain of a sound Understanding, and of a substantial Wisdom. For want hereof we find so vast a Number of Scholars, that aim rather at *Fame*, by being versed in many hard Authors; than at the *Glorry of God*, and Advantage of their Neighbour, by acquiring first an experimental Knowledge of the great Difference between *living to God*, and *living to our selves*; and then by influencing their Fellow-Creatures also with a Sense of so noble a Truth. I have met with some that took more Delight in giving an Account of an old Manuscript, than in turning a Soul from the World to Heaven. Which plainly shews they were altogether Strangers to the Worth and Excellency of Souls; since they took so little Pains to reclaim 'em. Nor is it probable Heaven's Interest should be heartily espoused by those, with whom the Love of the World bears the chief Sway. Though indeed Providence hath contrived it so  
wise-

wisely, that some grievously smart for their Vanity in affecting the Name and Reputation of *vast Scholars*; since oftentimes they become utterly unfit for thinking right themselves, whilst they waste their Lives in cramming other Mens Notions into their own Brains.

## IX.

(3.) If instead of railing at one another, and preaching at this rate Hatred rather than Love and Charity, the Clergy of all the particular Churches made it their only Business, *to preach Repentance and Faith*, according to the *first Article*; they would then shew the more of an Apostolick Spirit, and reap the more Fruit from their Labors. I have often wondered at their taking more Pleasure in the making of *Profelytes* to their Church, than in turning their own Flock from the World to Heaven; and from the Slavery of the Prince of the World, to the glorious Liberty of the Kingdom of God. He that hath a Tendernefs for the Perswasion he professes, should not encourage vicious

cious Worldlings to come over to it; since a great many well-disposed Souls ground their Esteem of a Church upon the Number of good Patterns of Piety, which that Church affords. Upon the whole, it is the Interest of those that would raise their Church and Perswasion to a greater Lustre and Dignity, to contribute what lies in them, to see it cleared from the common Corruptions that have spread themselves through all the Parties of Christendom; that so Christian Virtues might shine brighter in their own Church than in any other.

X.

(4.) If People of differing Persuasions did fall into Company, they should avoid all manner of Controversie; the handling wherof seldom betters Men, but often inflames Animosities to a higher degree. Most Men do think it a lessening of their own Reputation, and that of their Masters, if they should yield but one Tittle of their Scheme of Religion, and of the System of Divinity they have received from their Fathers. Whereas some have

have done good even upon Men of a differing Perswasion, by declining on purpose controverted Points, and grounding their Discourse upon such Subjects as are agreed on by all Hands, and which, as *Essential to Salvation*, are owned by all Parties, though practised but by very few.

## XI.

(5.) Those few that really know Christ (o) as the *Power and Wisdom of God* in the Faithful, and feel by this Knowledge (p) *eternal Life* springing up in them, and have thus attained to the blessed Experience of (q) *being one Spirit with Christ*, may endeavour to get acquainted together, and settle a Correspondence with one another on Account of carrying on the Work of Religion, though Providence hath placed them in different Provinces of the Lord's Vineyard. Such a Correspondence would not only prove a mutual Comfort and Incouragement to themselves, but they might also confer with one another.

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(o) 1 Cor. I. 24. (p) John XVII. 3.  
(q) 1 Cor. VI. 17.



another about promoting the common Interest of Christ against the Kingdom and Power of Darkneſs, which have all along ſo miſerably deluded, and delude ſtill, the Slaves of its Dominions, and thwart the good Deſigns of the Heirs of God's Kingdom. In the mean while let every one make it his main Buſineſs to ſtrengthen the Weak of his own Perſwaſion, and reſcue them from periſhing, that are upon the Brink of Deſtruction: For, even by ſuch Endeavours great Advantages would be added to the Church univerſal in time, every particular Congregation contributing what they can, towards building up the Walls of *Jeruſalem* on their Side.

XII.

If theſe few plain *Rules*, deſigned for helping to retrieve the Cauſe of Religion in this deplorable Age, ſhould prove ſucceſſful, and, under the Bleſſing of God, gain Ground in ſome Souls; then would the meek, peaceable, heavenly Spirit of Chriſt ſoon dethrone the haughty, broilſome and contentious Spirit of Satan

in Peoples Minds ; that so they might hasten without Let and Impediment to brotherly Love and Embraces. But the turbulent Opposers of Love and Union would be left to fret away by their so much beloved Sourness.

*Some Passages out of Macarius his Homilies, not altogether unsuitable to the foregoing Discourse.*

*Macarius Homil. XXXII.*

As the Sun inlightens the whole Earth, so is God every where. If you look for him in Heaven, there he is in the Thoughts of the Angels. If you seek him on Earth, there he is to be met with in the Hearts of Men. But of a great many, there are but few such Christians as please him.

*Homil. V.*

There is a great Difference between *real* Christians and the rest of Mankind. *Real Christians* have their Mind and Understanding always in a heavenly Disposition ; eternal Blessings are always in their Sight, by Reason of the Communion and Participation of the Holy Ghost. They are born of God from above ; they

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are dignified to be God's Children in Truth and Power. After much Labour, Sweat and Time, they arrive at a Settledness, Steadiness, Tranquillity and Comfort, ceasing to be sifted and tossed by fickle and vain Thoughts. In this they are better and greater than the World; because their Mind and Understanding rests in the Peace of Christ and the Love of the Holy Ghost; as the Lord speaking of such saith: *They are past from Death unto Life.*

Wherefore the Difference of Christians (from the rest of Men) doth not consist in *Form* and outward Appearance. For by the Renovation of the Mind, by the Tranquillity of the Thoughts, by the Love of the Lord, and by a heavenly Longing, differs the New Creature of Christians, from all the Men of the World.

*Homil. XXV.*

We have not yet obtained the Exultation of Christ's Salvation; because the Sting of Death sticks still in us. We have not yet put on the new Man, which is created after God in Holiness, because we have not yet put off the

the old Man corrupted, according to the Desires of the Deceit. We do not yet wear the heavenly Image, nor are made resembling to the Glory thereof; because in our mortal Body Sin bears the Sway still. We have not yet beheld the Glory of what is incorruptible; because we are still under a dark moonless Night. We have not yet put on the Armour of Light; because we have the Weapons and Works of Darkness still about us. We are not yet transformed by the Renovation of our Mind; because we continue in Conformity to the World by the Vanity of our Mind. We are not glorified with Christ; because we do not suffer with him. We carry not his Marks in our Body about us, by being entered into the Mystery of the Cross of Christ; for we are still wedded to our carnal Passions & Lusts. We are not yet become God's Heirs and Coheirs of Christ; because the Spirit of Servitude, and not of Adoption, reigns in us. We are not yet become a Temple of God, and a Habitation of the Holy Ghost; because we are still a Temple of Idols, and a lurking Place of wicked Spirits, by the strong Bent of our Soul to Passion.

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# PROPOSAL

For Promoting the

## Cause of RELIGION

IN THE

### *Churches of the Levant.*

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Comenius Parænes. ad Eccles. Anglican. de  
Bono Unitatis, p. 16. Edit. Lond.

*Utinam omnes qui Christi nomen invocant,  
solo CHRISTO nudoque Christo duce  
sibi constituto, Paulum, Apollo, Cepham  
ignorent! Uniusque salutis & gloriæ æter-  
næ scopo sibi fixo, cæteras nugas tanquam  
MUNDANAS impertinenter admistas quis-  
quillas, exesse jubeant!*

Pag. 47.

*Civis Ecclesiæ bonus non est, qui non commune  
bonum TOTIUS Ecclesiæ quærit, aut optat  
saltem.*

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Printed in the Year MDCCXII.

ТРОПОС

For Promoting the

Caule of Religion

Э Н Т И !

Journal of the Board

Original Filed August 19, 1968

1890

THE CHARTERED BANKERS

the English people, who are the

1900

1944-1945

*[Faint handwritten text]*

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# PROPOSAL

Relating to the  
Promotion of Religion in the Oriental Churches; offered in the Year 1700, to the Honourable Society for Propagating CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

Whoever hath a hearty Concern for the Interest of the Church of Christ, (of which to be a living Member is a great Happiness) cannot but thank God for having inspired some pious Souls with Zeal and Vigour for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and for forming themselves into a SOCIETY, in order to facilitate the better so important an Undertaking. It would render the more glorious the CHURCH of ENGLAND,

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if

146 *A Proposal concerning*

if they should endeavour, not only to promote *Real Christianity* among themselves, but influence other Churches also, both with their Example and kind Assistance, towards *answering the great Ends of the Gospel of Christ*.

The *Correspondencies* which are establishing with some good Souls among the rest of *Protestants*, will make these Partakers of what Favours God shall be pleased to bestow on his Church here, and encourage 'em to bring their Churches likewise to a more spiritual Lustre in Time. And should we be induced here to make it part of our Care, that the Brightness of our Light might dart forth some Rays into the Churches in the *East*; our Charity would then move in a larger Sphere than what is usual, in this cold and degenerate Age. It would bespeak the more Praise to him, who alone is the great Author of all good and perfect Gifts, and who is most served by those who are most instrumental in *helping their Fellow-Creatures*, and in communicating to others such Mercies, as they have received themselves at the Hand of the LORD.

I have



I have therefore thought fit to lay before this Honourable SOCIETY the following *Proposal* or Method, tending to promote the Cause of Christ and the Interest of Religion in the *Oriental Churches*; if the LORD, by his gracious Influence should perhaps stir up some to engage in so glorious an *Enterprise*.

I.

As the main Business towards compassing this *End*, would be to gain *first the Esteem* and Love of the *Oriental Churches*; so we cannot expect to obtain this, except we send such Patterns of Christian Virtues among 'em, as by their *meek Conduct* and prudent *Example*, render their *Conversation* both acceptable and edifying to the *Christians in the East*. But as for mutual Conversation, the Knowledge of Languages is required, so it would be necessary,

II.

That those that design to go thither, might at least in some degree acquaint themselves with the *Eastern Languages* before they did go on so laudable an *Errand*. The best Means to facilitate this would be, if a sort of an *Oriental COLLEGE* was established

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among us, out of which such Persons were chosen as might be recommended for serving as *Chaplains* to the Factories, which the Honourable COMPANY, trading in England to the *Levant*, hath in *Turkey*. In this College they might go about getting the *Vulgar Greek* at least, if not also the *Turkish* and *Arabick*.

The *Vulgar Greek* will be easie to those that have learned the *Book Greek*. But then they ought to use themselves to the modern Pronunciation of the *Grecians*. This will not only prove useful in quoting some Passages out of the New Testament, but will also be more acceptable to the *Grecians* themselves upon several Accounts.

If such a College could not be compassed, then every one designing to go to the *East*, ought at least to acquaint himself with all such Ways and Methods as in any manner might prove serviceable for supporting Religion and Piety among the Gentlemen of the Factories themselves, and then for scattering also some good Seed among other Nations in those Parts.

III.

But the greatest Service might be done in this Point, if a *SEMINARY* of young Men, chosen out of the Oriental Churches themselves, could be erected and managed, for the Good of the Nations in the East. But then the Managers of such a Constitution, should be entirely concerned about inculcating general and essential Principles of Christianity, without tampering at all with new *Forms, Modes, Schemes, Ceremonies* and *Circumstances* of Religion; whereby the best contrived Methods would be render'd altogether fruitless. For whilst we take the *Form* of Worship for the Worship it self, and a *Scheme* of Religion for Religion it self, we must, of Necessity, instead of the *SUBSTANCE* of Religion, propagate a bare *Scheme* thereof, which will in no wise be able, to stop the Torrent of Corruption among the differing Parties of Christendom. Not to mention here, that every particular Church would at this rate ingross Heaven to herself; consequently no Man would be able to do much good without the Pales of his own Church and Party. Whereas if some Youths

of the *Oriental Church* were trained up among us in the *FUNDAMENTALS* of Religion only, and in a sound *Practice* of Evangelical Truths, without breaking in upon their *external Form*, and peculiar way of their Church-Worship; they would then more readily receive good Instructions at our Hands here, and more easily propagate them again among their Brethren at Home. Not to insist here, how these *essential* Truths, well digested *within*, would afterwards of course discover, and in Time rectifie, what might be deficient *without*, nay, influence the whole Constitution, and external Scheme of the Church, with Life, Power and Energy.

## IV.

If the abovesaid *Honourable Society* did chuse a *Committee* from amongst themselves, to make the State of the *Oriental Churches* their particular Care; the Gentlemen of such a Committee might then settle a useful *Correspondence* with some of the most *eminent* and best disposed Men in the East, for carrying on the Work of Reformation among them. Those

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might acquire, in time, a competent Knowledge of the State of these Churches, of the various Lets and Impediments obstructing a sound Reformation, of the *Causes* of their Decay, and, under the Blessing of God, contrive *Means* to help 'em. They might furnish with good Directions such as did either go as Chaplains to the Factories there, or had some other Christian Resolutions in their Eye. They might find out ways to encourage ingenious young Men to come from the *Levant*, amongst us, and then send 'em back with good Instructions, to further the Work of God in their native Country.

V.

A small *Scriptural-Catechism*, containing the Principles of sound Christianity, laid down in the very Words of Scripture, \* and distributed among the *Levantine*s, might do good to a great many Souls. Such a *Trea-*

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*tise*

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\* There have since been Two Impressions of the whole New-Testament in vulgar Greek, for the Use of the Churches in the *Levant*: One printed at London, in the Year 1703; and the other at Hall, in the Year 1710.

152 *A Proposal concerning, &c.*

*rise* would be less liable to Exceptions than Books of other Churches sent over to them; every particular Church making it a Point both of Honour and Conscience to stoop too much to another Church. For want of small Books to teach the Boys to read, the poor School-Masters are forced to set down in Writing the several Lessons the Children are to read. So that a *Compendium of the Elements of Christianity* dispersed in that Nation, would be very useful to forward the Design in Hand. If a Word or two was added by way of *Preface*, intimating, that some Christian Souls here, had done this by a Motive of hearty Love to their Brethren of the *Greek-Church*; it would sooner convince them of our Love and Kindness to them, and engage 'em in a like Return of cordial Love and Friendship; *LOVE* being always the surest and safest Inlet into other Peoples Minds. May the LORD teach us all an experimental Knowledge of this divine Truth: *God is Love, and he that abideth in Love, abideth in God, and God in him!*

R E.

# REFLEXIONS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

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Hieron. Savonarol. Epist. ad Tract. de Simplicit. Vitæ christian.

*In hac infelicissimæ ætatis nostræ conditione adeo FIDES defecit, & adeo lumen SUPERNATURALE in hominibus extinctum esse videtur; ut discernere nequeam, an hi, qui se firmiter credere fatentur, potius OPINIONE quadam ducti, tanquam a pueritia sic nutriti; an vero fidei lumine supernaturali ea, quæ ad fidem Christianam pertinent, vera esse confirment. Cum enim refriguerit charitas, & operum bonorum fructus non appareat, de fide Christianorum quid hodie dixerim, ambigo.*

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The Second Edition.

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Printed in the Year MDCCXII.

## REFLECTIONS

О. М. Т. И. Р.

PRESENT STATE

Д И Т Ч О

RECEIVED

1910

The first of these is the fact that the  
 British Government has been unable to  
 secure the necessary funds to carry out  
 its policy of maintaining the status quo  
 in the Middle East. This has led to a  
 series of crises, the most recent of which  
 was the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. The  
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THE SECRET



## REFLEXIONS

ON THE  
PRESENT STATE  
OF THE  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

## I.

WHilst we *Protestants* exclaim against the Idolatry of the *Papists*, we take no Notice of the *Idols* of our own *Brain*, to which we bow in our different Ways of *Orthodoxy*; altho' the Kingdom of God is but little more promoted by all our fine Speculations; than by the Superstitions of *Rome*, and of the Churches in the *East*. Vices that were abhorred by *Pagans*, are common among us: yea, many of those, that ought to teach others the way to the Kingdom of God,

God, are still under the Power of Satan themselves, through *Covetousness, Ambition, and Sensuality*; the Desire of Riches, of Honour, and sensual Pleasure, making up the *Three Branches* of the infernal Loadstone, which draws away Souls from God, and plunges them into Troubles and Torments: As the Desire of enjoying God, by knowing him, and obeying his holy Will, is the heavenly Loadstone, which draws us to the Fountain of our Being, where we meet with Life, Peace, Contentment and Joy; so that by a living Faith, we may feed on the Bread of Life, which is the Light or Emanation of the Love of God, or the Brightness of his divine Glory.

## II.

It is a great Misfortune, that the greatest Part of the *CLERGY* of all Communion do not perceive, that God is upon his way to *break down* (a) all the *false Draughts and Schemes* which the Antichristian Spirit of Sectarism hath contrived, instead of substantial

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(a) *Ezek. XIII. 14, 15.*

stantial Christianity, which is the Restoring of the Image of God in the new Creature, or the Kingdom and Life of God within us. Were they not blinded by the Power of Darkness, which is to cover the Earth, (b) before the Glory of God is manifested there, they would be convinc'd by the Broils and Disorders which reign among 'em, that all things grow worse and worse; that God withdraweth his Peace from 'em more and more; (which is the Treasure and Pledge that Jesus Christ left to his own) and that all their Systems and Labours are not sufficient to stop the Progress of Atheism and Enthusiasm, by which the Prince of this World endeavours to cast Dust into our Eyes, to make us suspect all Operations of the Holy Ghost.

III.

I know not which of these Three is most to be pitied; (tho' indeed, taking it aright, we shall find 'em all Three deceived by the Spirit of Pride,) whe-

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(b) Isa. LX. 1, 2.

whether a Man intoxicated with his *SECT*, in which Zeal neither Turk nor Jew can pretend to go beyond him: or a *Fanatick*, that mistakes the extravagant Whims of his *FANCY* for the Light and Spirit of God: or a Man, that relies on his *REASON* in the State of corrupt Nature, when we find every Day such horrid Disorders in all the Faculties of the Soul.

## IV.

The *Fanatick* undeceived at last by the Event, stands so much the more upon his Guard, and searches after the true Light with the greater Earnestness: But a Man, that relies on his *Sact*, or on his *Reason*, does not so much as in the least mistrust the Power of Darkness that reigns in his Heart; where the Enemy of Salvation intrenches himself so much the more strongly, as the Imagination, puffed up with *Self-conceit*, and some notional *Ideas* of the *Means of Grace*, increases the Obstacles that hinder the divine Grace from having its proper *Effect* upon our Souls. For our Saviour plainly tells us, that we are not



fit to have any Share or Interest in him, unless we *deny our selves*, and, from our Hearts, abhor the natural, perverse Bent of our Souls, which ties us more to the Things that perish, and to our selves, than to him that can destroy this corrupt Byass which is the Source of *Death*; and who can bestow upon us the true *Life*, whereof he is the Spring himself.

V.

There are some that pretend to have a *great Zeal for the Church*: But as they take more Care to *increase their own Sect*, than to bring it back to its first inward as well as outward Purity; we need not wonder if the Profelytes they make, are very seldom such as they may justly boast of. They that perceive, that a Spirit directly opposite to the humble and meek Spirit of JESUS CHRIST must needs produce that Hatred and Animosity, with which the different Parties worry and devour one another, begin to think of some Expedient, to put a Stop to these Abominations: and to this End, have here and there

there proposed Ways or Methods to reconcile the Differences between Protestants.

## VI.

But alas ! the Wound is too desperate than to be cured by *Humane Projects*, as we see, that a Physician in vain undertakes the Cure of a Patient, when his *Vitals* or the most principal Parts are wasted. Nay, should we suppose them to meet with Success in their Undertaking, (which yet will never be,) the Malady would but still grow worse ; since all their Endeavours would tend only to set up a new *Image of Orthodoxy*, and a Form of outward Worship. And then the more Resemblance this Image might perhaps have with its Original, the more it would bewitch its Worshipers, and hinder them from pursuing the Enjoyment of the *TRUE* Original. Instead of a *SAVIOUR*, who is to deliver us from that, which is *Enmity to God*, and who can and will destroy the Kingdom of the Devil, by plucking up the Root of Sin in us, we have now of a long time pleased our selves

with

with the *Idea* of an *imaginary* Saviour, who will save us, tho' we should have no Mind to die unto Sin: As if *SIN* were not the only Thing that separates us from God, and by consequence, the only Hindrance of our Salvation. It is an unaccountable piece of Folly, to desire to be saved by a *Method* directly opposite to that which is prescribed by our Saviour himself, and whereof he has given us an Example in his own Person, and which the Apostles as well as himself have commanded us to follow.

VII.

The Devil laughs at all our *Orthodoxy*, and at all the *Forms* that the Will of Man is able to invent; unless we begin to seek the good old way of dying to the World by *SELF-DENIAL*, and proclaiming open War against all the Inclinations of our corrupt Nature, which turn us away from God. Without this, all *Repentance* is but imaginary; as all *Faith* is no better than Delusion, when it is not built on the Foundation of unfeigned Repentance.

VIII.

## VIII.

All Men concern'd for the Glory of God will join their Wishes, that it would please our Sovereign Master, to supply his Church with such Ministers, as know by their own Experience, what it is to have *passed from Darknes to Light, (c) and from Death to Life, (d)* as the Scripture phraseth it; to the End, they may be able, worthily to discharge that *Commission*, which *JESUS CHRIST* hath left his Apostles, *viz. to preach Repentance and Faith*, according to the Tenor of the Instructions given to St. Paul. (e) Then would they be able to say to their Flock: *Be ye Followers of me, even as I am of Christ. (f)* Those of their Hearers, who, by following this Direction, should through Jesus Christ return to the Father, would then find, that *JESUS CHRIST* being the *Power and Wisdom of God, (g)* did not only discover unto them the

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(c) 1 John III. 14. (d) Col. I. 13. (e) Acts XXVI. 18. (f) 1 Cor. XI. 1. (g) 1 Cor. I. 24.



divine Will, but conferr'd also  
Strength to perform it.

IX.

This *living Knowledge* of Jesus Christ, will secure them from the perverse Reason of *Atheists, Deists, and Socinians*; from the false Light of *Enthusiasts*, and from the deluded Fancy of *Orthodoxy*, which all Sects have set up in the Room of that **TRUTH** which is in *Jesus Christ*, which alone is to set us free from that Slavery wherein the Father of Lies keeps us in Chains, by the perverse Byass of our Will, and by false Notions of the Nature of Happiness, and of the Way to obtain it.

X.

Many, very many, will repent at leisure, for having so officiously intruded upon the Charge of *conducting others*, before they had once begun themselves to walk in the Paths of Life; and without having the least Perception of that Abyfs of Misery, into which the Fall of the first Man has

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has plunged us. In this their corrupt State, whatever they preach to others, will be nothing but empty Speculations, and fine Fooleries, under the Appearance of witty or acute Reasonings. Whereby they may indeed charm the Ears of their Auditors, drown'd in the same Spirit of Vanity, but will never pierce the Heart of the Sinner, to awaken him out of his deep Drowsiness, and to make him think in good earnest of making his Peace with God. This is the Reason, we see, by sad Experience, that the Hearts of Men are very little changed, and that the World continues to walk on merrily in the broad way of Destruction, notwithstanding the vast Number of Preachers that abound every where; but whereof the most part have a greater Talent to persuade their Hearers into a *false Peace*, than to instruct them how to fight the good Fight of Faith in such a manner, that they may finally receive the Crown of Life.

XI.

To my Comfort, I am more and more confirmed in believing, that God will soon teach us another Lesson by these terrible Judgments, the Flame whereof shall consume the Wicked, and purifie the Good, (h) to the End we may once see the Accomplishment of those glorious Promises God hath made to his Church, and that the Presumption of false Reason be confounded, which has made a great many People, given up to Blindness of Heart, believe, that God sits unconcerned about the Affairs of the World, & leaveth second Causes to act, without his offering any more to interfere with that Motion he hath given them in the Creation.

XII.

I am the more perswaded, that we are at the Eve of that grand critical Time, call'd in holy Scripture, *The great*

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(h) Conf. Isa. IV. 4. Chap. XXXIII. 14. Zach. XIII. 9. Mal. III. 3, 4.

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great Day of Vengeance and Wrath of God; because God hath of late not only shewed many dreadful Examples, how easily he can confound the Pride and Craftiness of Princes, as well as of private Persons: But chiefly, because all is so dreadfully embroil'd, that we may well say, God has begun to shake both *Heaven and Earth*; this being the Expression whereby the said critical time is described in several Places of Scripture. (i) Whether we understand by *Heaven and Earth*, (1.) the Church and State, or (2.) Light and Darkeness, or (3.) the inward World, which is the spiritual Creation, and the outward, which is the corporeal Creation, it will be much one and the same Thing.

### XIII.

I know some Persons, who have experienced this in themselves, and have been sensible of such Effects in Soul and Body, as have put Divines and Physicians to a non-plus; altho'

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(i) *Hag.* II. 6, 7. *Isa.* III. 16. *Heb.* XII. 26.



notwithstanding their Blindness, they pretended to reason about the said Accidents ; as commonly humane Reason is so much the more confident to do, as much the more it is destitute of the true *Light*, which is the Spring of right Reason.

XIV.

It is to be feared, that the *false Predictions* which our *New Prophets* have uttered, of the Time and Manner of these Judgments, will harden but more the Hearts of vain Worldlings, to make a Jest of all the *Threatnings* of approaching Judgments ; and that the Chains of their Captivity will be but strengthened thereby ; as it is to happen, when God shall surprise the World with his great and *strange Work*. (k)

But the Children of that Wisdom, which is *from above*, know, how to make good Use of all ; and being far from inclining to slumber, upon Account of *false Alarms*, they take occasion thereby, to be the more upon their

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(k) *Isa.* XXVIII. 21, 22.

their Guard. Besides, that it is much better to be prepared for the Hour of the great Temptation many Years before-hand, than to perish for want of being provided for it.

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## *Postscript of the Author.*

**T**Hese *Reflexions* came out in French in the Year 1709; and the latter part of them seems to deserve so much the more Consideration, because the Wrath of God is rather increasing, than decreasing over all *Europe*. The Commotions of the outward World in Church and State, intricating things more and more, testify of the utmost Endeavours of the Power of Darkness in the inward World, inflaming the Minds with the hellish Principle of *SELFISHNESS*, from which proceed all manner of crafty and violent Designs against one another: So that a Zeal for Religion is made the very Pretence for acting contrary to all Gospel-Principles of Christian LOVE and HUMILITY.

The common Enemy must be very much pleased, to fool People out of a living Knowledge of Christ, whilst they are quarrelling about the way to come to him. The Spirit of *Apostacy* keeps Possession of the Heart by *Self-love*, whilst every one hugs himself with his *Brain-Work-Divinity*; and by his Eagerness for the *Outside* and *Form*, unfits himself for experiencing the Substance and Power of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

However, it is the Hope as well as the Wish of God's Servants, in differing Perswasions, that Light will soon triumph in *Love* and *Peace* over the Kingdom of Darkness, which breeds *Strife* and *Envy*ing as the unhappy Product of that *Wisdom*, which is *earthly, sensual* and *devilish*. (1)

Certainly God will confound all that are *their own Idols*, in trusting to their own Wisdom and Strength, and seek their own, rather than the Glory of Him, who is the *Fountain* of all Beings, and the only *Center* of their Rest and Happiness. God's wonderful Wisdom is like to appear so much

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(1) *Jam. III. 14, 15.*

the more manifestly, when the hot-headed party-zeal will prove a devouring Fire to the Parties themselves, and drive the humble, sincere Souls out of all Parties for Shelter and Deliverance into the *CENTER* of true Union, the *LOVE* of God in Christ Jesus. Then shall be brought forth out of the Wilderness, that Spouse, which is said to *lean on her Beloved*, (m) which is glorious, holy, without Spot, Wrinkle, or any such thing. (n) Then the Jews, Turks and Heathens will be convinced, that God is in the midst of her (o), and that it is Time for them to bow to the King of Kings, who has bestowed so glorious a Majesty upon his Royal Spouse: Infidels having made it hitherto a great Exception against the Truth of the Gospel of Christ, that the Professors of it have so little of that Holiness, without which it is impossible to please the *MOST HOLY*.

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(m) Cant. VIII. 5. (n) Eph. V. 27.  
 (o) Zeph. III. 15, 16.



THE  
SUBSTANCE  
OF THE  
XLV. HOMILY  
OF  
MACARIUS.

Done out of GREEK

BY

HEN. WILL. LUDOLF.

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ABp. Leighton Serm. XVII.

*Nothing maketh so strong and healthful  
a Constitution of Soul as PURE  
LOVE.*

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Printed in the Year, MDCCXII.

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THE  
XLV. HOMILY  
OF  
MACARIUS.

Done out of GREEK.

The Argument.

*Neither Knowledge, nor Wealth of this World, can restore Man to his lost Happiness. This is only to be attained by the divine Manifestation of CHRIST in the Soul. Man's Proximity and near Relation to God.*

The HOMILY.

**H**E that truly maketh RELIGION his Choice, ought to look on all that this World affords as things altogether out of his Way, and

not at all for his Turn. For he that sincerely follows the Lord Jesus Christ, in taking up his Cross, having renounced all, and even his own Soul, must fix his Mind and Heart on the Love of Christ; preferring this his LORD to Parents, Brethren, Wife, Children, Kindred, Friends, and worldly Possessions, according to that Saying of our Saviour: *He that loveth Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, and Possessions, more than me, is not worthy of me.* And he that is not prepared to part with all, and to follow me, cannot be my Disciple. For in him alone is the Salvation and Happiness of Men to be found.

## II.

Let us but consider how many Kings and Princes descended from *Adam's Race*, have been accounted *great* and famous in the World; possessing vast Dominions, and glorying in their Royal Power. Yet notwithstanding all this, none of them was enabled by this his empty Glory, to discover that spiritual Misery, which by the Transgression of the first Man hath



hath invaded the Soul, and darkened it to that degree, that it cannot so much as perceive the sad Change, *viz.* in what blessed manner our pure Mind beheld its Lord in the Beginning, and what unspeakable Bliss and Dignity it then enjoyed in him ! But how it is now after the Forfeiture of this divine Glory by the Fall, cloathed with Shame and Misery ; the Eyes of the Heart being so blinded, that there is now no seeing of that Glory, which our first Parents beheld before their Disobedience.

### III.

There have been also several wise Men in the World, amongst whom some have been much spoken of on Account of their *Moral Virtues*. Others have been famous for Sophistry, Rhetorick, Poetry and History. Some skilful *Artists* in Painting and Sculpture have been likewise renowned, for their ingenious Imitation of the wonderful Nature in fashioning the Statues of Men and Beasts to the Life. By magnificent Buildings and stupendous Pyramids some others have at-

tempted to immortalize their Memory. Others have rummaged the Bowels of the Earth, and fetched up Treasures of Gold, Silver, and precious Stones. Some, in fine, were adored for their amazing Beauty, of which they grew proud, and were thereby the sooner inticed to Sin, and led to Destruction by the Devil. Now all these afore said *Princes, Philosophers* and *Artists*, being detained by the Serpent dwelling within, and remaining insensible of Sin, so closely adhering to them, became Prisoners and Slaves to the Power of Darkness, without being the better for all their worldly Skill and Knowledge.

## IV.

So that we may compare the World, with all its Varieties, to a rich Man in Possession of great and splendid Palaces, and worldly Treasures, with vast Possessions, and pompous Attendance ; but withal, so overwhelmed by many painful Sickneses and heavy Afflictions, that he findeth no Comfort in all his Wealth and Relations, though they should  
sur-

surround him on all Sides. Even so, nothing of what relates to us in this World, nor any Endeavour and Ability of our dearest Friends, nor any temporal Wealth or Strength, nor any thing abovementioned, can deliver our Soul of the State of Sin and Wrath, in which by Nature she is immersed; and besides, so deeply involved in Darkness, that she entirely lost the pure Sight of things. But Thanks be to God, this wretched State of Man is curable by the spiritual Appearance of *CHRIST* in the Soul, which is able to cleanse both Soul and Body from all Defilement. Wherefore let us disentangle ourselves from all anxious Cares for the things of this World, and let us devote our selves wholly to the LORD, waiting upon him continually, and crying to him Night and Day for his gracious Support. For this visible World, with the Delight it affords, the more it seems to cherish our Body, the more it fomenteth the Lusts, and provoketh the Passions of our Mind, and hereby increaseth its Suffering.

## V.

It was a curious but a vain Experiment of one that would spare no Pains to search out the true *Happiness* of Man; and thereupon made it his Business to *try all what this World affords*, if perhaps he might find true Contentment in it. He had recourse to the *Palaces* of Kings, and Princes, and great Men: But he could not find there any sufficient Cure for his Soul, so that all the time thus spent stood him in no stead. He therefore resorted to the *wise* and *learned* of the World: But gave them over too, without being the better for them. He applied himself afterwards to great *Artists*, and Men of Experience in the glittering Works of Vanity, Pomp, and Curiosity: But neither were they able to provide a saving Remedy for his inward Distemper. At last he took his Leave of them all, & applied himself to GOD in *JESUS CHRIST*, as his only Portion. And it was then he had the Passions and Diseases of the Soul healed and cured. And having (through Grace) done



done this heartily and effectually, and reflecting now upon himself, he perceived that his Mind was come to it self again, which all this while was gone astray in the vain Pursuit of all those empty *Objects*. Whereupon he now disintangled himself from them, and became averse to them.

VI.

As a *Virgin* of great Fortune and large Possessions in this World is subject to many Cheats and Oppressors, who will attempt to incroach upon her, and do her wrong: She being destitute of necessary Protection, at last yields to the Courtship of a most entire Friend, who solicits her Consent in Marriage. And 'tis he in whom she finds all desirable Support and Happiness, and confiding in him her Soul is at Rest. Thus is it with our Soul also. Since the Fall, she is used very hard by the Violence of the Adversary, and is brought under very dismal Circumstances. She is like a Widow desolate and forsaken by her heavenly Spouse for having proved false to him, being  
now.

now shamefully handled by the Powers of Darknes. For they have bereaved her of her Senses, and clouded her heavenly Understanding to that degree, that she is not so much as sensible of the Mischief that is done her, but fancieth it was ever so from the Beginning. But being at last convinced of her dismal and forlorn State, she bemoans her Desolation before that infinite Goodness, which is affected with so tender a Compassion towards Mankind. And by these Means she finds Life and Salvation, after she is returned to her primitive Extraction and heavenly Pedigree. For there is no nearer Relation, nor stricter Union, than that between God and the Soul.

## VII.

Although the Almighty Creator hath made Multitudes of noble Creatures, which by their various and admirable Natures, praise their Creator's Wisdom, Goodness and Power, from the smallest Plant and Animal, up to the stupendious Globes, which for these many Thousand Years past have

have afforded a benign Influence to the visible Creation: Yea, though there are glorious Ranks of ministring Spirits, which, with unspeakable Grandeur, perpetually attend their great LORD: Nevertheless in none of all these hath God chosen himself an *Habitation*. The whole Creation is under the Maker's Command; but he hath no where fixed his Throne, nor to any vouchsafed Communion with himself, except to *MAN*, who, being his Delight, and admitted into Fellowship with him, is made his Abode and resting Place. So that by this you perceive how near God is related to Man, and Man to God: And consequently you need not wonder, if a discerning and understanding Soul, wandring through all the Creatures, meets with no satisfactory Rest, till at last she returns to her *Father* and *Lord*. And to our great Consolation, we do not find such Tenderness, Affection and Complacency, exprest in the holy Scriptures, either to Angels, or any other Being, as it is to *MAN*.

## VIII.

If we lift up our Eyes to the *Sun*, we observe his Body in Heaven, but his Light and Rays tending towards the Earth, to which the Virtue of his Light and Splendour doth descend. So likewise our Lord sits on the right Hand of the Father, above all Principality and Power, but casts his gracious Eyes upon the Hearts of Men that live on Earth, in order to lift up thither where he is, those that wait for and trust in his Help. For he says: *Where I am, there shall my Servant be also.* And St. Paul: *He hath raised us up together with him, and made us sit together in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.* But the very Beasts, deprived of Understanding, are more prudent than we: For they will only join with those that are of the same Nature with them: The wild with the wild, and the Sheep with those of their own kind. Only thou, O Man! dost not return to thy heavenly Relation, which is the *LORD*; but givest thy self up to thy own Devices, by complying with the Bent of thy  
perverse



perverse Inclinations: And whilst thou thus art become helpful to Sin, thou makest War against thy self, and deliverest thy self up as a Prey to the Enemy. Just as a Bird catch'd by an Eagle, or a Sheep by a Wolf, will certainly be devoured: Or as a silly Boy laying hold on a Serpent, and bitten by him, must look for the sad Symptoms of mortal Poyson: So it is in spiritual Matters. Similitudes fetched from corporeal things afford us a little Glimse of the spiritual Work.

IX.

As a *Virgin* of a good Fortune betrothed unto a Man, and receiving never so fine Presents and Ornaments from him before the Nuptials, can in no wise be satisfied, till the Consummation of the Marriage-Union be fully compleated, and she brought to an entire Enjoyment of the *Object* of her Love: Just so it is with our Soul, prepared as a Bride for her heavenly Spouse. She receiveth indeed the *Earnest* of the Spirit in the divine Gifts, let it be either the Gift of *Heal-*  
*ing,*

ing, or of Knowledge, or of Illumination: Yet doth she never rest in all this, but goes on till she attain at last to the Enjoyment of a perfect Communion with God himself; that is, to such a Love as is unchangeable and never-failing, and consequently, frees those from Anxiety and Trouble that obtain it.

Or, as a Child dressed up in the finest Cloaths, and decked with the richest Pearls and Jewels of a wealthy Father. Let this Child be but hungry, and you'll see him not to make any Account at all of all his Fineries and Ornaments; nay, nothing will satisfy him but the Breast of the Mother, supplying him with Milk for his Sustentation. Just so it is with the *Spiritual Gifts* of God.

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### A POSTSCRIPT of the Translator.

**I**T appears by this *HOMILY*, that this holy Author had another Idea of real Christianity, and of its Nature and Advantages, than our modern

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*Formalists and superficial Pretenders to Religion.* Many brag of their *Orthodoxy*, and of a primitive and *Apostolical Dispensation*, of the Means of Grace; without examining, whether they use the said Means to the same Purposes as the primitive Christians and the holy Apostles did: And whether they improve in that Holiness, which is the *AIM* and Substance of the Gospel of Christ in all its Laws and Ordinances.

The Design of publishing the Substance of this *Homily in English*, is to encourage some well-disposed Person, to undertake the Translation of the rest of this Author's Homilies. The propagating of this sort of real Christianity, may be the best Means to unite Protestants. For if they strive heartily to be united to God, they will then draw nigh to him, who is the *CENTER* of all true Union. And the nearer one approacheth to God, the more he will find himself united with all such as are like him; which our blessed Saviour intimateth in his Farewel-Prayer, *John XVII. 21: That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in*

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me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in us.


But all our Endeavours for Union will be lost, if we fancy, by any outward Union, to escape the common Danger that threatens the whole Body of *Protestants* at this Juncture. If we could agree about all manner of *Opinions* and *Forms* of Church-Service, but did continue worldly and carnal as before, we should not only be never a whit the nearer to Heaven for it; but find our selves still under the Influence of the Power of Darkness; which would not fail to breed Pride, Wrath, Injustice, Strife and Hatred: Whereas by our turning heartily to God, and becoming Subjects of his Kingdom; Peace, Love, Righteousness and Holiness would bear Rule in our Hearts; and set us above the Malice of our great Enemy, and all the subordinate Tools of his Craft and Tyranny.

F I N I S.

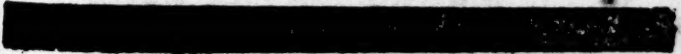
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*In the Funeral-Serm. p. 27. l. 22. for Possession, read Possession.*



  
**N**OW *LUDOLF* rests, who liv'd a Pilgrim <sup>(true,</sup>  
And wheresoe're he went had Heav'n in View :  
Like *Moses*, thro' the WilderNESS he walk'd,  
And still to God he look'd, of God he talk'd ;  
Hence his Seraphick Soul was grown so bright,  
He every Object round him ting'd with Light.  
From his Instructive Converse none cou'd part,  
Without a wiser Head, or warmer Heart.  
Faithful unto his God, his Prince, his Friend,  
Pious his Life, and blest'd and calm his End.

Keep his Example, Reader ! in thine Eye,  
And live like him, if thou like him wou'dst  
(die !



Pro-

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